

AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

**DISCIPLESHIP REVISITED:
A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY**

by

Byeong ho Lee

A doctoral project submitted to the
Graduate School of Theology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Ministry

Azusa, California

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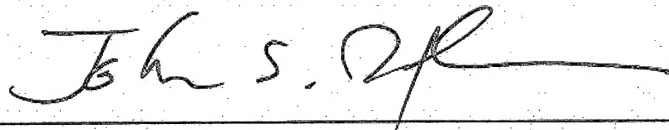
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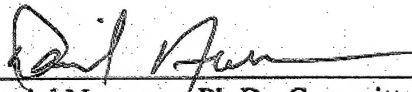
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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Seong Ae, and my sons, Paul and David.

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ABSTRACT

DISCIPLESHIP REVISITED: A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

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Discipleship training within the Korean church finds its roots from missionary organizations, and it has focused mainly on Bible study. Such training met the demands made by the Korean church in the 1970s and 1980s. However, forming a careful balance between disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence are most important for discipleship training. For the last 30 years, the Korean church's discipleship training was based on disciplines of engagement, which in turn was established on only logical approaches to the Bible, and it failed to balance itself with disciplines of abstinence. Furthermore, today's Korean church has formed an utterly different set of values and cultures, which, as it is observable in the field, proves that the currently employed discipleship training is inadequate to nurture the younger generation into becoming Christ-following disciples. To overcome its limits and to nurture disciples, discipleship training must accompany spiritual discipline. Although spiritual discipline has its mystical and individualistic traits, its various trainings through its long neglected

constituents, Self-Control and Godliness, will help to surmount the limitations of disciplines of engagements and its logical approaches to the Bible.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of Christian church crisis has always been a natural companion. During times of crisis originating from outside the church, it overcame hindrances and challenges by faith and patience. However, when the church was confronted by internally posed crises, it often fell victim to these conflicts. In fact, most of the Epistles in the New Testament depict these internal types of crisis and their consequences.

Likewise, the Korean church has not yet completely freed itself from internal crises. During the early days of the Korean Church, when it suffered greatly from outside persecutions, Korean Christians endured violence, turbulence, and even imminently life-threatening dangers due to their faith. Eventually, the Korean church has become one of the most influential, missions-oriented churches in the world. However, it is still confronting many crises, some of which have lasted for a long time.

Today, most discipleship training efforts within the Korean church focus largely on Bible studies borrowed from student societies or organizations that are specifically and uniquely designed for people with higher education. During the initial stages of discipleship training in the Korean church, many criticisms and conflicts occurred. In the 1970s and 80s the demand for Bible studies increased suddenly. The Bible studies immediately became the most widely accepted and utilized form of developing and

nourishing faithful church members. As a result, many Korean Christians acquired a profound knowledge and understanding of the Bible. Moreover, they were able to confidently identify themselves – and even retain their sense of identity – as Christians through such discipleship, even during rapid socioeconomic changes, such as the one Korean Christians witnessed in the 1970s and 80s. Following this success, many similar models of Bible studies were introduced and utilized. The Korean church grew not only in spiritual maturity, but also grew in numbers. In other words, the Korean church grew in number, matured its sense of identity, and moved a step closer to accomplishing the Great Commission through implementing and strictly upholding Bible studies at that time. Consequently, this is the main reason why Korean churches largely employed Bible study-focused discipleship training.

In contrast, today's discipleship is like a discharging car battery in the sense that it is not re-charging because there has not been a fair evaluation or assessment of all the discipleship training efforts in Korean churches for the last 30 years. Without proper evaluation, the chances of improving the overall quality of discipleship training - hence, of the overall Christian population - is slim. Therefore, a fair and objective evaluation of Korean churches and their discipleship training methods must be conducted to make the Korean church grow not only in its size but in its spirituality. However, Korea has evolved into a totally different society and nourished distinctively new cultures within the last three decades. The Korean church should not measure itself with the same standards introduced 30 years ago. Rather, we need to establish and employ new measuring standards that take into consideration all the societal changes the country has undergone, under which discipleship training thus far has taken place.

Unlike the socio-economic change within the Korean society, through which many positive results were obtained, the changes within the Korean church have produced many negative outcomes, which are now considered losses. For instance, the Korean Christian seems to have forgotten the very purpose of discipleship training. Discipleship training means to train oneself spiritually to gradually resemble Jesus Christ. However, many of the programs used by Korean churches for discipleship training were aimed, not for producing disciples, but rather for growing numerically. One of the more serious causes for such a phenomenon was the lack of a godly attitude coupled with the inability among ministers and pastors to comprehend the true meaning of discipleship training. Any minister or pastor who wished to promote discipleship training in church needed to possess profound experience in (a) implementing and upholding the elements of discipleship training, (b) transforming and molding another's inmost values and beliefs, and (c) living a holy life. Truly, having a good leader precedes having a good guide book or program. However, due to the lack of experience among many Korean ministers and pastors, certain limitations of discipleship were exposed and further development was inhibited. In fact, many Korean churches have merely conducted discipleship training as a program for the purpose of growing the church, rather than making and producing disciples.

Secondly, there has been a wrongful interpretation of the term "discipleship training" among Korean Christians. Some have participated in discipleship training as a part of the program to obtain a high position or to play a more spotlighted role, and thus the desire for reputation and greed has hindered the Korean church from conducting a more objective assessment of its performance. As a result, the Korean church is now

being criticized not for its negligence toward the Great Commission or the mission field, but rather for its moral issues.

It was in the early 2000s when the aforementioned problems surfaced. Although there has been a great proliferation in the number and kinds of discipleship training programs, most were Bible studies conducted in a seminary school. During the 1980s, these Bible studies were intended for young adults, but now in 2013 most attendees are now middle-aged or elderly. Likewise, such discipleship training methods should have paralleled the growth and been geared toward nourishing and strengthening spirituality, but the Korean church has stalled at simply acquiring biblical knowledge, which has blocked further development. To renew and rebuild the Korean church, as well as to help make future disciples of Christ, these defects need to be reversed in current discipleship training methods and programs.

Despite its need to have an interest in spirituality, the Korean church has a negative perception toward it. One chief reason is that spirituality is based on the monasticism of the Middle Ages, which has become an issue today since many Korean churches are opposed to the Catholic Church and Catholicism. Also, the fact that the term “spirituality” has no unequivocal meaning but is rather a broad and ambiguous term has played a significant role in cultivating this negative perception. As such, each person now uses his or her own theological standpoint to define “spirituality,” and it has been observed that people view “spirituality” as mystical and inscrutable. Furthermore, society has successfully linked “yoga,” “self-reflection,” and “meditation” to “spirituality,” which has created even more confusion among Korean Christians.

Upon a careful and thorough scrutiny and study of spirituality, however, we can

discover that it shares many similarities with discipleship training. In fact, the title of this dissertation is based on this particular point of view. As discipleship training inspires people to follow and resemble Christ, so does spirituality, for its purpose is also to help believers find and walk with Jesus, who dwells within us. Even though many view spirituality as mystic and inscrutable, to be spiritually renewing, discipleship must be accompanied by spirituality. In other words, we need to live a holier life not solely through Bible studies, which have hitherto characterized discipleship training, but also through practicing self-control and godliness, which are the chief traits of spirituality.

Problem Statement

Therefore, this research examines Korean Christian discipleship training patterns in order to develop spiritual formation training appropriate for a new generation.

Research Questions

There are many questions we are still asking ourselves today about the difference between discipleship training and spiritual formation training. These questions are as follows: (a) What are the discipleship training patterns in the Korean church? (b) What is the relationship of spiritual formation training to holiness and how does it provide help for becoming holy? (c) How can the development of self-control and godliness be part of the strategy of spiritual formation training?

Methodology

To answer these questions, I will explain in Chapter 2 how discipleship training was given and established in the Korean church. In the meantime, much effort will be exerted to define the term “discipleship” in a more applicable sense. Also, I will highlight the contributions and limitations of discipleship training.

In Chapter 3 I will explain and highlight the significance that Dallas Willard's disciplines of engagement and abstinence pose to spirituality. Through studying the various elements of the disciplines of engagement and abstinence I will also explain how to develop and nourish a well-balanced, true disciple.

In Chapter 4 I will discuss the relationship between spirituality and holiness. As different and only slightly related as they may appear to be, there are in fact numerous similarities shared by these two concepts. Furthermore, I will define spirituality and how it applies to the Korean church, which is this paper's overall topic.

In Chapter 5 I will explore the biblical background of 2 Peter 1:3-11, which depicts the foundation and elements of spirituality. These verses are particularly noteworthy for they suggest the eight virtues of spirituality. For the purpose of this paper I will explicate the relationship between spiritual formation training and the roles of these characteristics, and I will conclude by defining the "right" way of approaching and realizing spirituality.

Finally, I will introduce two elements of spiritual formation training, which are self-control and godliness. All eight virtues of spirituality are needed for spiritual formation training in order to equip a well-balanced disciple. However, most Korean churches only teach the disciplines of engagement (study, worship, prayer, submission, and fellowship), but they disregard the disciplines of abstinence (solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, and sacrifice). As result, discipleship training in the Korean church is widely regarded as being imbalanced. Self-control and godliness not only are included in the disciplines of abstinence, but are also essential elements in helping to restore discipleship in the Korean church. In addition, I will focus on how to integrate these two elements into

today's Korean church by using historical examples and sample guide books. Applying self-control and godliness will help the Korean church identify and understand its next steps and its future direction.

To reach true discipleship, which purports to inspire Christians to become more like Jesus Christ, one must not only possess knowledge of the Bible, but also live a life of holiness through spirituality. Applying the eight virtues of spirituality will help implement balance in discipleship training. Among all of the disciplines, practicing self-control and godliness must precede others, for the Korean church has hitherto solely focused on fellowship and enlarging the knowledge base of Korean Christians. As a result, Christian morals and values have become less significant.

In order to remedy this I will first attempt to research the literature on the discipleship training and spiritual formation training that has thus far been executed in Korean churches. However, it is not easy to properly evaluate discipleship training due to the lack of objective evaluation standards. Therefore, it shall be my priority to first visit and assess the methods of discipleship training employed by famous churches and student organizations.

CHAPTER 2

MODELS OF DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING IN THE KOREAN CHURCH

Discipleship training in Korea clearly stands out from that in other countries. Korean churches adopted various formats for Bible studies from missionary organizations and several organizations greatly influenced and inspired the boom of disciple training in Korea. In this chapter, I will introduce how these organizations influenced the Korean church and its discipleship training.

Representative Discipleship Training Organizations

There are many discipleship training organizations that influenced college ministries in Korea; however, I will focus on two: (a) Korea Campus Crusade for Christ (KCCC) and (b) Korean Navigators.

Korea Campus Crusade for Christ

Korea Campus Crusade for Christ was established when Jungon Kim, who studied at Fuller Theological Seminary, met the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, Bill Bright. It first began in Jeongdong First Methodist church in South Korea in 1958, and focused on evangelism and nurturing, thereby greatly contributing to the overall growth of discipleship training and the spiritual revival of the Korean church.¹ One of

¹ Korea Campus Crusade for Christ Web site, <http://kccc.org/?Code=A00003&type=html> (accessed November 23, 2012).

the most noteworthy characteristics of KCCC is that it uses Bill Bright's Four Spiritual Laws to challenge Korean Christians to focus on and consider evangelism as a personal responsibility, rather than perceive it as a mere duty to be carried out within their own communities. At the same time, KCCC provided the basic principles of Bible studies and highlighted the importance of small groups. These discipleship training programs, coupled with small group meeting and leadership training, contributed greatly to the growth of the Korean church. KCCC also sent students to both their workplaces and other countries for evangelism and renewed the meaning of Christian life. This further awakened the Korean church and made it realize the importance of ministering.

Korean Navigators

Korean Navigators first began in September 1966. Its vision and Declaration of Ministry clearly has reflected its organizational direction: "Korean Navigators give priority to give help people be born again in Jesus Christ, to equip Christians for a lay minister, and to self-reproduce as a mature disciple with qualification through evangelism and nurture."² Korean Navigators has focused on evangelizing and making disciples within colleges and workplace ministries. This vision of ministry has aspired to transform college students into disciples on their respective college campuses. Eventually, Korean churches have accepted that discipleship through evangelism, and so nurturing does not solely belong to college campuses; they have realized that it should be incorporated in the general church community as well. As a result, many college ministries and their discipleship, evangelism, and nurturing programs have become an essential part of the Korean church and have made a significant impact on it.

² Korean Navigators Web site, <http://www.navigators.or.kr/ministry.html> (accessed November 23, 2012).

However, these methods have created great pressure on local churches due to their differing cultures, targeted age groups, and social strata. As a result, many Korean churches have kept away from campus ministries and their discipleship training methods, which includes Bible studies and Quiet Times, for such programs drastically contrasted from traditional church services and sermons that most elderly people were accustomed to. In spite of such limitations, however, local churches gradually shifted to academic discipleship training, with a greater emphasis on not only ecclesiology but also their doctrine. Thus, the foundation of discipleship training in Korea was laid.

Representative Churches of Discipleship Training

Many Korean churches have adopted nurturing programs and Bible studies from college ministries, among which were Ok Hanheum's Sarang Community Church and Ha Youngjo's Onnuri Community Church. They not only introduced discipleship training, but also actively motivated and inspired Korean Christians to participate.

Sarang Community Church

According to Ok's book, *Call to Awaken the Laity*,³ the Sarang church formulated the early concepts of church-led discipleship in Korea. In the preface he insisted that the discipleship training of Sarang church heralded the new era for the Korean church.⁴ He clarified that he had not acquired formal training from discipleship training – rather, he learned the principles of discipleship training from outside campus ministries. This was only natural then, for at that time conducting discipleship training in the church was

³ Hanheum Ok, *Pyeongssindo-leul Kaeunda* (Call to awaken the laity) (Seoul: Duranno, 1995).

⁴ Ibid., 11.

disparate, foreign, and unorthodox.⁵

He also confessed that there were many internal troubles and obstacles during the early days of Sarang Church. For instance, he acknowledged and identified the lack of passion for prayer as the most serious and critical weakness despite the increasing numbers of Bible studies and increasing number of church members.⁶ This phenomenon was in fact present in both the Sarang Church and other churches that adopted discipleship training programs. Indeed, the lack of passion for prayer and the stunted development of different kinds of spiritual gifts still remain as unresolved issues in the Sarang Church's discipleship training efforts.

Onnuri Community Church

It was Onnuri Community Church's Quiet Times (QT) and the One-to-One Discipling programs that made a great impact on local churches. The concept of QT, which was to assist Korean Christians to meditate and apply God's Words in their everyday lives without any formal training or education, was then a great challenge to the Korean church. However, the One-to-One Discipling program established by Onnuri enabled Korean churches to more easily understand disciple training. Indeed, through Quiet Times and the One-to-One Discipling programs the Onnuri Church produced results that exceeded expectations.

Onnuri's One-to-One Discipling program is based on the same principles as the Bible studies and small group meetings conducted in KCCC and Korean Navigators,

⁵ Ibid., 256-258.

⁶ Ibid.

except it highlights ecclesiology much more than the other two organizations.⁷ As a result, it provided a way to understand missionary organizations' unique discipleship training concepts, and functioned as an opportunity to expand the importance of Bible studies through small group meetings.

General Evaluation of Korean Discipleship Training

Discipleship training has both positively and negatively influenced the Korean church and I will explain what these influences have been.

Positive Influences

Korean churches accepted discipleship training, first, because of the changes it brought to young adults, and second, due to the increase in demand by Korean Christians. The Sarang Church is a good example of meeting the demands of the time. "There is worship but there is not witness for Christ, and there is education but there is not discipleship as the people of God to respond to the will of God."⁸ Eventually, Korean churches reached the point where they could no longer neglect the public's demand for more sophisticated discipleship training.

In the early 1970s the Korean society as a whole demanded transformative change after its tremendous economic growth, and the young adults in churches were not excepted. During that time Korean churches only focused on spiritual revival, which emphasized the importance and role of prayer. Young Korean Christians expected changes to occur within the Korean church, but the churches could not meet their demands. Therefore, young people could not find any special meaning in their faith.

⁷ Durano, *Ildaail Jejayangyuk Seonggyeonggongbu* (The one to one discipline program) (Seoul: Durano, 20001), 6.

⁸ Hanheum Ok, *Pyeongsoondo-leul Kaeunda*, 59.

Instead, young Christians turned to campus ministries and their Bible studies within small group settings to meet their expectations. The Sarang church actively encouraged this demand by integrating the Bible studies of missionary organizations and thereby provided the possibility of further growth of the Korean church.

Until the 1980s Korean churches grew through revivals, Bible reading, and the prayer mountain movement. However, in the midst of a rapidly changing society, where there was a lack of systematic comprehension, research, and application of the Bible, Korean Christians became confused of their identity, which ultimately led to the establishment of many heretical cults. However, when the Korean church borrowed and employed the methods and programs of discipleship training from missionary organizations, it helped Christians reacquire and secure their sense of identity. In other words, discipleship training through Bible studies contributed greatly to developing the Korean Christian identity.

Discipleship training at the Sarang Church brought about an unexpected result of recovering the apostolicity of the church and rediscovering the laity. Until discipleship training was properly integrated and applied in the church, the laity was viewed as a subject for pastoral caring. However, discipleship training changed this view, and the church began to see the laity as its main agent.⁹ This change in perception also transformed how pastors identified themselves – from seeing themselves as a representation of the Church's authority to perceiving themselves as disciplers and trainers of Christ's followers.

⁹ Hanheum Ok, *Igeosi Mokoewi Bonjil-ida* (This is the essential pastoral ministry) (Seoul: Gukjejea Hulyeonwon, 2004), 25.

Negative Influences

Despite prominently emphasizing ecclesiology, church-led discipleship training programs had limits when applied to local churches, which throughout time formed their unique and various traditions. First, discipleship training in the Korean church has been more theoretical than practical in its approach. Discipleship and training are not an end in themselves, but they must be used as tools for spiritual growth and maturity. Second, the Korean church has run into the risk of institutionalism. As the Korean church accepted discipleship training as a means for growth, it tainted this training and deviated from its purpose, which was to nurture a complete disciple. Third, discipleship training must be available for anyone, not only to specific groups or select people. However, most discipleship programs that have taken place within the Korean church have become complicated, and thereby have become distanced and have been perceived as unapproachable. Anyone can participate in worship and grow with the help of the Holy Spirit, in prayer and through His Words. However, discipleship training in Korea created an impression that without participating in such activities, no one could become a whole and complete disciple of Jesus Christ.

Emphasis on Theological Discipleship

It is possible in discipleship training to become Jesus' disciple through various and diverse means.¹⁰ Willard mentioned in his book the two broad categories of disciplines: (a) disciplines of engagement and (b) disciplines of abstinence. These disciplines could further be branched into several subcategories. For instance, abstinence consists of solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, chastity, secrecy, and sacrifice. On the

¹⁰ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), 158.

other hand, engagement is comprised of study, worship, celebration, service, prayer, fellowship, confession, and submission.¹¹ However, the Korean church has relied too heavily on the study element of engagement through various Bible studies. Although it is true that the Korean church has undergone surprising growth, this overdependence on Bible studies has arguably limited further spiritual transformation and growth. Below are Tables 1, 2, and 3, which compare and contrast the contents of discipleship training from the Sarang church, the Onnuri church, KCCC, and Korean Navigators.

As observed above, even though each step has different content, most of the content of discipleship training in Korean churches and organizations are the same content and titles. Only the underlined content is unique content not being taught at other institutions. For instance, Personal Testimony, Sanctification of Christians, The Second Coming of Jesus, Virtue of Tongue, Spiritual Growth, Pure Life, Spiritual Warfare, and Love Each Other have been found exclusively in the Sarang church. On the other hand, Life with Hope has been exclusive to Korean Navigators. With the foregoing exceptions, the other content has been shared between the three organizations.

The features and contents of discipleship training at the Sarang church are more related to the basis of living a Christian life than those of the Onnuri church and Korean Navigators. However, there is a need to evaluate the actual application and execution of these curriculums. This is because most discipleship trainings have been executed in the form of lectures. Also, such methods for training seem to be most effective for today's busy Christians.

The problem with this is that overemphasizing biblical intelligence during

¹¹ Ibid., 156-192

Table 1

Comparison of the Introduction Step among Discipleship Trainings

Sarang Church	Onnuri Church	Korean Navigators	KCCC
The Foundation of Discipline	Jesus Christ Who is Jesus?	The Conviction of Christians Salvation and Conviction	The Uniqueness of Jesus Who is Jesus?
<u>Personal Testimony</u>	What did Jesus do?	Conviction of Triumph	The life of Jesus on earth
Life with Working God	What does Jesus do now?	Conviction of Forgiveness	The Death of Jesus
Quiet Time	Believe Jesus	Conviction of Guidance	The Resurrection of Jesus
God's Word			Living Christ in Christians
Prayer			<u>The Church of Jesus</u>
The Respond of Prayer			

Note. Only the underlined content is unique content not being taught at other institutions.

Table 2

Comparison of the Intermediate Step among Discipleship Trainings

Sarang Church	Onnuri Church	Korean Navigators	KCCC
Unshakable Salvation	About Quiet Time	The Rule of Christians Life	Starting Christianity
My Salvation		Life in Christ	The conviction of Christians
The Authority of Bible		Life by God's Word	The personality of Christians
Who is God?		Life by Holy Spirit	The Lordship
Who is Jesus?		Life by Faith	The principal of spiritual
Trinity of God		Life by Love	growth
The Death of Jesus		Life with Fellowship	<u>The authority of Christians</u>
The Resurrection of Jesus		Witness Life	<u>Church</u>
The Holy Spirit		Life with Abundant Offering	
Man Born Again			
What is a Faith			
Justified Grace			
<u>Sanctification of Christians</u>			
<u>The Second Coming of Jesus</u>			

Note. Only the underlined content is unique content not being taught at other institutions.

Table 3

Comparison of the High Step among Discipleship Trainings

Sarang Church	Onnuri Church	Korean Navigators	KCCC
Become A Little Jesus	One to One Discipline	New Life in Christ	10 Stages in Bible Study
Submission Life	Program	Fellowship with Christ	Abundant Life
Devotion Life	The Conviction of Salvation	Working with Christ	Holy Spirit
<u>Virtue of Tongue</u>	The Attribute of God	Personality of Christians	Prayer
Spiritual Growth	God's Word	Foundation of Faith	Bible
<u>Pure Life</u>	Prayer	Growth in Devotion	Submission
<u>Family Life of Christians</u>	Fellowship	<u>Life with Hope</u>	Witness
<u>Trial of Character</u>	Witness	Life with Fellowship	The Stewardship
The Lordship	Life filled with Holy Spirit	Life with Triumph	<u>Old Testament</u>
The Stewardship	Life with Overcoming trials	Personal Bible Study	<u>New Testament</u>
<u>The Spiritual Warfare</u>	Submission Life		
<u>Love Each Other</u>			

Note. Only the underlined content is unique content not being taught at other institutions.

discipleship training makes the entire process appear as merely an exercise in teaching Biblical doctrines. However, discipleship training must cover intelligence as well as every other aspect of life. In his book *Worldview and Development*, Darrow L. Miller insists that:

That church in the twentieth century are interested only in theology, ethic, and mission but not in intelligence, business, and politics. Therefore it forms disdifferntiation of worldview essence of church. Furthermore, if someone becomes Christian, they think that he needs to participate in discipleship training as a Jesus follower. However, they only want to teach a new believer reading bible and prayer but they want that they do not know any more.¹²

If we disregard ethics and morality in a Christian's life, we cannot have an impact on people.

Thomas A. Kempis, a spiritual leader during the Middle Ages who influenced John Wesley's idea on Christian perfection, emphasized in his book, *Imitation of Christ*, the importance of knowing and doing: "Truly, at the Day of Judgment we shall not be examined not by what we have read, but what we have done; not how well we have spoken, but how religiously we have lived."¹³ In no way did Kempis disregard or neglect learning and knowing from others. Rather, he highlighted the importance of learning and claimed that true knowledge came from God. Also, he further claimed, as all human knowledge posed uncertainty, all people must be humble and live a good and virtuous life.

The question needs to be asked: is it possible to recover the essence? It appears that leaders believe that if Christians only know their doctrine, they will be disciples.

¹² Darrow L. Miller, *Morae-aeseo PenTeoemchip-kkagi* (Worldview and development: the power of truth to transform poverty), trans. Kim Huisuk (Seoul: International Development Institute, 2000), 53.

¹³ Thomas A Kempis, *Imitation of Christ* (NY: Hurst Publishers, 1843), 25.

Sang Bum Shim insists that “Discipleship training in Sarang church raises many important questions about enlarging the kingdom of God and recovering from the essence of church because it is not certain that it really contributes to enlarging the kingdom of God and recovering from the essence of church.”¹⁴ Even though the Sarang Church introduced and enlarged the importance of discipleship training, it lacked the methods for training disciples.

Sarang Church’s discipleship training, which eventually led to the blooming of discipleship training in the Korean church, opened the possibility for the Korean church to grow into a healthier church. Truly, Korean Christians who, until participating in discipleship training, viewed themselves as passive subjects, began to perceive themselves as the main agents of the Korean church, which has allowed people to have hope for a better future. However, the Korean society must reassess the strategies and directions of the Korean church, considering the overwhelming external criticisms and expressions of disappointment directed toward it.

For this reason, newer strategies and studies must be proposed to trigger and encourage a deeper spiritual growth and maturity. In other words, discipleship training that aspires to achieve a more complete transformation among Korean Christians must be reborn to comply with societal changes and to meet the demands of the general public.

Institutionalized Programs of Disciple Training

Michael J. Wilkins, author of *Following the Master*, explains the meaning of discipleship through historical and theological research of both the Old and New Testaments. He defines discipleship as the bridge that connects this world to Jesus and

¹⁴ Sangbeom Sim, “Hankukgyohoe Jejahullyeon-ui Seonggyeongjeok Pyeongga-wa Jeonmang (The biblical evaluation and prospect of disciple training in South Korea),” *Sinhakginam* 290(2007): 11-12.

His followers.¹⁵ In the meantime, he identified institutionalism as the most dangerous factor in discipleship:

The true discipleship was to know Jesus so well, to follow him so closely, that the ultimate goal was to be conformed to his image... This points to one of the great dangers of any kind of discipleship program: focusing so much on the practices of discipleship that we lose sight of the goal. We see in these disciples what I refer to as the dangers of institutionalism.¹⁶

The reason institutionalism has been considered the most dangerous factor is that it creates and implants an impression that discipleship's purpose is not to develop and nurture Christians, but rather to aid in growth in numbers. In reality, discipleship training programs are not being employed as a means of inspiring Christians to follow Jesus. In most cases, they are utilized as educational programs to help captivate a greater number of registered church members. To respond to this broken system, a paradigm shift among pastors must be demanded. They must live a life of holiness by first spiritually transforming and maturing themselves through a stricter discipleship. Not properly preparing pastors prior to their leading their respective congregations will degrade discipleship training into mere educational programs, an occurrence which in fact has already taken place within the Korean church.

As discipleship training became much more widely known, many Christians accepted disciple training as a process and procedure to obtain key positions within their churches, not as a means to reach spiritual maturity. In reality, many churches force their members to complete discipleship training programs to allot them roles and titles. Consequentially, the level and number of transformations were limited to only a few, and

¹⁵ Michael J. Wilkins, *Following the Master: Discipleship in the Steps of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan publishing House, 1992), 17-21.

¹⁶ Ibid., 352-353.

due to this reason, many churches and discipleship training efforts have lost credibility within Korean society.

If people neglect and overlook the importance of proper application and supervision of discipleship training, they will never reach a true and complete spiritual transformation. In his book *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Robert E. Colman explained the evils of negligence by highlighting that only under Jesus' constant vigilance and supervision was the early church able to grow and obey the Great Commission.¹⁷

Complications of Discipleship Training

Discipleship training programs were first created for the purpose of evangelism at college campuses. As such, they were designed to quench college students' curiosity by providing them the theological backgrounds of biblical doctrines. As a result, many student missionary organizations, such as KCCC and Korean Navigators, developed booklets and other instructional aids to further college students' understanding of the Bible and to drive growth of the younger Christian population. Naturally, when these programs were brought into churches, difficulties followed. To average Christians these programs were viewed as overly sophisticated, designed only for academically inclined people. The more complicated a program, the more difficult the spiritual transformation. Also, as such a view became fixed, Jesus' Great Commission became more hindered. Neil Cole explained the reason for general discipleship training's difficulty in reproducing disciples:

Perhaps the reason that we don't see multiplication of disciples more often is that we are trying to do too much too soon in the process. We fail to grasp the fact that discipleship, following Christ in simple obedience, is a life- long pursuit. ... We

¹⁷ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1994), 89~95.

tend to overestimate what we can do in a year and underestimate what we can do in three years.¹⁸

As he insisted already, the reasons for difficulty in reproducing disciples are trying to do too much too soon in the process and having a too complicated program.

As Sarang Church's discipleship training programs produced great successes, churches competitively developed and applied their own forms of discipleship training, during which the program as a whole became even more complex. In the end, discipleship training became the sole responsibility of educated and properly trained pastors and ministers instead of being available for average Christians to supervise. An even worse outcome of such phenomenon was that Christians who completed discipleship programs and became small group leaders within their respective communities concluded that the ultimate goal of discipleship training was becoming a leader, rather than being spiritually transformed.

Certainly, the purpose of discipleship training is to follow and resemble Jesus. Without discipleship training, we cannot know nor follow Him. However, the contemporary Korean church indulges simply in completing the programs of discipleship training, but not in fulfilling their purpose: to be spiritually transformed. Maxie Dunnam explains the importance of discipleship training:

As Christians we do not emerge full-blown; we grow. We grow by discipline. So let's be clear as we begin. Discipline is not an end in itself. ... We have made discipline an end, not a means. We have even used it as a proof of our "sainthood." That is the reason Christians is often presented as a somber, self-denying, word-denying way that produces pinch-faced sadness.¹⁹

¹⁸ Neil Cole, *Cultivating a Life for God* (IL: Church Smart Resources, 1999), 36.

¹⁹ Maxie D. Dunnam, *The Workbook on Spiritual Disciplines* (Tennessee: The Upper Room, 1984), 8.

Discipleship training in the Korean church first began as a means to resemble Christ. However, many churches and organizations found it to be an end in itself. Soon after, they became dangerous by deviating from the purpose of discipleship training and immersing themselves into institutionalism.

The True Meaning of Discipleship Training

To restore the essence of church through discipleship training knowing the true meaning of discipleship training is very important. Therefore, I will explain what the important features in discipleship training are in Korean churches.

Institutionalism Prevents a Well-Balanced Discipleship Training

According to Wilkins, Jesus serves as an exemplary model of the true meaning of discipleship training. He has emphasized three components of well-balanced discipleship training, which are (a) personalizing the discipleship training, (b) helping the disciple understand the cost of discipleship, and (c) helping the disciple to resemble Christ. Engaging in discipleship to follow Jesus brings about changes in lifestyle and patterns in believers, thereby creating their profound spiritual transformation; thus, their changed lives form a more fundamental relationship with Jesus Christ. In other words, outward speech or appearances do not represent people's conformation to specific churches or organizations. Rather, people must realize that Jesus accepts them as who they are and has designed a unique life of discipleship for each believer.²⁰

However, because of Confucianism most Korean churches are regarded as hierarchical organizations. Therefore, much discipleship training utilized by the Korean church has placed too much emphasis on the importance of being in a community or an

²⁰ Michael J. Wilkins, *Following the Master: Discipleship in the Steps of Jesus*, 355-356.

organization. The Korean church has been on its guard against individual discipleship because it has believed it would create conflicts between individualism and extreme egoism. Such fear and tendency toward communal discipleship is portrayed through their overly frequent reliance on the phrases such as “one word,” “one will,” and “one idea.” It is important to have a communal discipleship. However, unless balanced with individual discipleship, it cannot produce the types of transformation a true and complete discipleship would bring about.

The best way of focusing on communal discipleship while equally encouraging individual discipleship is to have people engage in personal Bible reading, meditation, prayer, and the discipline of self-control within a church community. Wilkins also would agree to this and make a suggestion that reading and listening to God’s Words and devoting a designated time to prayer are the more effective ways to keep a balance between traditional and personal approaches to discipleship. Moreover, he emphasizes the importance of affiliating oneself to a Christian community to learn from “the body of Christ.”²¹

Challenge Them to Count the Cost

Wilkins points out, “Nothing is more despised by a true surfer than a ‘poser,’ a person who plays the role of surfer but does not really surf. The challenge to count the cost of discipleship means the difference between posing as a disciple and living as one.”²² Most disciple trainings in Korea require an investment of a tremendous amount of time and devotion. In fact, participants are required to meet certain attendance criteria

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 356-357.

and to submit an overwhelming number of assignments as if attending an institute of higher education. However, such discipleship training does not require, even request, participants to apply their newly acquired knowledge or devotion to Jesus Christ in their everyday lives. They are led to believe that simply submitting assignments is sufficient discipleship training in itself. As Wilkins mentioned, there is a differences between a person who plays a role of a surfer and a true surfer.²³ In other words, one must repeatedly and physically apply theories and principles in the field, and likewise, one can only become a true disciple if he or she practices the principles and teachings of discipleship in his or her everyday life.

Become Like Christ

Wilkins explained how we can become like Christ. He insists:

Becoming like Jesus includes goes out with the same message, ministry, and compassion (Mt 10:5ff); practicing the same religious and social traditions (Mt12:1-8; Mk 2:18-22); belonging to the same family of obedience (Mt 12:46-50); exercising the same servant hood (Mt 10:42-45; Mt 20:26-28; Jn 13:12-17); and experiencing the same suffering (Mt 10:16-25; Mk 10:38-39). The true disciples was to know Jesus so well, was to have followed him so closely, that he or she would become like him. The ultimate goal was to be conformed to his image.²⁴

This is the ultimate goal of spiritual formation training. Although many Korean churches understand the importance of knowing Jesus, they have thus far neglected following Him. To fix this, Korean Churches should endeavor to develop proper guidance and training to conform to His image.

“Love each other” is a very important concept in the Bible and is found in all literatures, in Korean and in other languages. One of the books that exerted the most

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 357.

influence over Korean discipleship and churches is David Watson's *Discipleship*. It even can be said that every minister who has any interest in discipleship in Korea has read this book. It describes the theological background and introduces real-life application of discipleship. He accurately emphasizes that discipleship is Jesus' master plan for the humankind.²⁵ However, his stance on "love each other" pales in comparison to that of other topics. For instance, in the first chapter of his book, he discusses Jesus' calling to live a "simple life" and "submission," but he rarely mentions "love each other."²⁶

Even in Sarang church's discipleship, "love each other" only appears in one chapter of its entire stance program. In following and resembling Jesus Christ, His love for men and knowing how to apply such love in today's society are of paramount importance. To make a true disciple, the Korean church must introduce the theory of discipleship and specific applications and models for real life. However, today's Korean church is facing many demands and requests to develop and improve programs due to its lack of discipleship training to "love each other."

Summary

Discipleship trainings in Korea were developed as an active response to the rapid growth and social changes within the Korean church and society. Although first adopted from student organizations, by coupling the concepts with ecclesiology, these training programs promised profound growth in the Korean church. However, the church needs to learn again what true discipleship is and why balance is important.

²⁵ David Watson, *Discipleship* (Toronto: The shalom Trust, 1983), 18.

²⁶ If when we check his book's table of contents, we can see a title for loving each other but it is very limited. It is also a fragmentary in nature and the lack of space given to it diminishes the importance of loving each other. 7-11.

CHAPTER 3

THE NEED FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION TRAINING

Despite such wonderful contributions and outcomes of Korean discipleship training, the Korean church has encountered problems that naturally occurred due to inherent limitations. The imbalance between the disciplines of engagement and the disciplines of abstinence can be attributed as the cause of these problems. To correct these wrongs and make disciples of Christ, the Korean church has to research the positive principles and strengths of *spiritual formation* training. Therefore, I will explain what spiritual formation training is and why it is important to the Korean church.

Spiritual Formation Training to Accompany Discipleship Training

Even though spiritual formation training is important, it was not a part of the Korean church until the present for many reasons. To achieve well-balanced discipleship, spiritual formation training must be applied to discipleship training.

Need for Spiritual Formation Training

According to Marjorie J. Thompson, the need for the spiritual disciplines is not confined to the Korean society or the Korean church. It is a general phenomenon that needs to take place regardless of nationality. She also has explained that the need for the spiritual disciplines is based on spiritual desperation. She further has insisted that it also

depends on cultural, individual, and spiritual causes.²⁷

In her book Thompson defines a cultural cause as the need for spiritual disciplines that is triggered by (a) the scientific denial of religion, (b) tremendous societal change due to technological advancement, (c) the longing for true virtue and values, and (d) the fear of an uncertain future. On the other hand, the need for spiritual disciplines that is caused by an individual cause is triggered by (a) the need to find a tool to reinterpret pain, (b) the longing to know the existence of God in everyday life, and (c) the need for spiritual disciplines that comes as a result of problems with the traditions of the church. Lastly, the need for spiritual disciplines can be attributed to the search for the meaning of life as a spiritual being. The author concludes by identifying God as the cause of today's spiritual desperation, for he created men to need him.²⁸

The reader may see that the need for spiritual disciplines, according to Thompson, is not only a modern desire. Instead, the need for spiritual disciplines exists regardless of time and place. For this reason, the need for spiritual disciplines explains why so many secular books that discuss spirituality are published. The rapid rate of change in modern history is unprecedented, which has increased people's confusion in defining values and intensified their fear of change, thereby deepening their need for spirituality. Korean Christians especially have experienced a very rapid socioeconomic change. Not only that, due to the confusion of their value system, caused by this rapid socioeconomic change, the need for spiritual formation training has become more real in their lives.

²⁷ Marjorie J. Thompson, *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* (KY: Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 1-5.

²⁸ Ibid.

Korean Church's Pessimism Concerning Spiritual Formation Training

Despite the need for spiritual disciplines, the Korean church has not been able to fulfill it because of its pessimistic outlook toward it. However, deeper scrutiny and research has shown that spiritual formation training has already taken place in its own forms in the Korean church, so it is not a completely foreign concept. For this reason, this chapter will describe what types of spiritual formation training have taken place in the Korean church and how they have taken place.

Re-Discovery of Spiritual Formation Training

The growth of the Korean church has declined since the 1990s, according to the Korean census, which takes place every five years. Unfortunately, despite the efforts placed in research conducted by ministers and theologians, the actual cause and possible remedial plans for this decline are yet to be identified. This does not mean that no churches are growing; however, this growth is attributed to migratory church members.

The possible causes for the decline of the Korean church's growth can be explained in many ways. Spiritual formation trainings that have focused only on an individual church's growth can be identified as a major cause. Such disciplines only emphasized individuals' salvation. They did not exert much influence in the overall society. The Korean church prides itself in its investment and devotion to prayer and Bible study as well as its participation to worship services and overseas missions. However, most of the spiritual formation trainings since the 1980s in Korea have revolved around disciplines of engagement, which focus on service, learning, prayer, fellowship, and obedience. Disciplines of abstinence, which focus on solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, mercy, and sacrifice, were not practiced, and this has caused the church

to lose its balance. In fact, disciplines of abstinence have even been misconstrued as a form of discipline that has been practiced by cultists. Through this study I wish to speak of the need for disciplines of abstinence to go abreast with disciplines of engagement for the well-balanced growth of the Korean church, despite the criticism that disciplines of abstinence are overly skewed toward individualism and mysticism in Korean churches. This collaboration between the disciplines of abstinence and the disciplines of engagement may help to reduce and suppress the anti-Christian sentiment within the Korean society and aid in nourishing a better balanced growth of individual Christians.

However, in order to specifically discuss and apply the importance and technical concepts of the disciplines of abstinence, the benefits and problems of the disciplines of engagement, which have dominated the Korean church until today, must first be assessed. There is also a need to scrutinize the decline in prayer centers in Korea, which have played a major role in promoting the disciplines of abstinence. Understanding how the decline of prayer centers has affected the overall spirituality of the Korean church can aid in proceeding with this thesis. Along with this, studying Willard's *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, which introduces a new perspective on spiritual disciplines for well-balanced spiritual development, and the disciplines of abstinence practiced within Wesley's small group campaigns will also help develop a balanced spiritual understanding.

Practicing Disciplines of Engagement in the Korean Church

The influence of the disciplines of engagement can be positive or negative. In building true discipleship, it is important to know what kind of influence the disciplines of engagement have.

Spiritual Formation Training of Engagement

It is not an understatement to say that the Korean church since the 1980s, has focused more on disciplines of engagement and not functioned harmoniously with disciplines of abstinence. Ingyu Song, who has exerted a great influence over and triggered student evangelism activities through his literature ministry, insists that “The people in laity have become an important and resourceful asset to the Korean church as they have acquired much biblical knowledge from numerous Bible studies, quiet times, explosive evangelism, and disciple training of the 1980s.”²⁹ The above methods of training, as it may be inferred, are mainly those of disciplines of engagement. It also serves as a good example of the claim that the majority of the programs the Korean church has exercised since the 1980s are mostly those of the disciplines of engagement.

Disciplines of abstinence have slowly disappeared as prayer centers and fasting campaigns entered a state of deep depression. This has been caused by the rapid socioeconomic growth in Korea, which has been coupled with the people’s tendency to pursue comfort and convenience. Christians hardly visit prayer centers any more, and in the rare times they do, they use these centers as a place for relaxation rather than for spiritual growth. Since then, the spiritual disciplines used within the Korean Protestant church have been primarily in disciplines of engagement, not disciplines of abstinence.

Emphasis on Disciplines of Engagement through Discipleship Training

Discipleship training, which has taken place since the 1980s, started as a means to reform the Korean church. At the time when discipleship training was first implemented, the Korean church grew at a pace faster than any other periods in the entire church history.

²⁹ Ingyu Song, *Segyeleul Pumeun Geuriseudoin* (Christians who have the world in their minds) (Seoul: IVP, 1992), 57.

It was only natural that as the number of the churches grew, it lost its sense of identity. To this phenomenon, Hanheum Ok explains:

Many can easily hear the concerns for and criticisms against the Korean church these days. Quite frankly, we all have had a serious, self-realized anxiety for the church for a long time. This anxiety is a form of fear – like the one that is induced when we see a wall of bricks without a strong foundation. It may be said that the increase in the number of the Korean church has conceived and birthed a great confusion.³⁰

As he mentioned above, the concern for the Korean church's secularization has been attributed as the reason for beginning discipleship training. At the time discipleship training had been introduced, it has been treated and regarded as the solution to this concern. Contrary to the general perception that the number of believers would decrease as a result of implementing disciple training, the church has undergone great growth. Ok insisted that "For this reason, the price a church has to pay for training is the decrease in the number of congregation members. The evangelism that follows and obeys the New Testament shall focus on devotion and fellowship, not statistics and relationships."³¹ However, contrary to the comment above, people observed an immediate growth in the number of members, and many churches began to use discipleship training merely as a means to grow in numbers.

Certainly, discipleship training has exerted a positive influence on the Korean church. First, in place of revivals and Bible classes, which had until then led the growth of the Korean church, discipleship training became the new leading program for growth. Secondly, unlike revivals and Bible classes, discipleship training constructed systematic educational structures. It also helped the Korean church, which had always separated the

³⁰ Hanheum Ok, *Pyeongsoindo-leul Kaeunda*, 25.

³¹ Ibid., 30.

Word and one's behaviors or actions due to the influence of Confucianism, to overcome its inherent problems. It also implanted the right Christian worldview for the Korean church, which suffered greatly from rapid socioeconomic changes.

Despite these benefits, the main problem with disciplines of engagement is that the church employed these disciplines merely as a theoretical study of the Bible. Not only that, the engagement methodologies used in discipleship training were limited and not diversified, for the Korean church only employed the method that proved to be successful in larger churches or organizations.³² As Willard mentioned, there are many methods one may utilize to train disciples, and they must be well-balanced in spirituality.³³ Discipleship training, which until now has been largely comprised of engagement, must be used together with disciplines of abstinence, such as solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, secrecy, and sacrifice, to nourish well-balanced, holistic disciples.

Decreasing of Prayer Centers and Their Spiritual Disciplines

Until the 1980s, the Korean church proceeded with disciplines of abstinence through praying and fasting at prayer centers, and through silence in solitude prayers. It is noteworthy to point out that praying at prayer centers does not completely exclude engagement, but it mainly consists of fasting and silence, which are distinctive methods of abstinence. But the prolific and opulent lifestyles created by the socioeconomic growth in the Korean society triggered a sudden change in Korean Christians' spiritual behaviors. Due to this change, the role prayer centers served within the Korean church diminished, and the importance of regional churches was highlighted. Steadily, prayer centers lost

³² Ibid.

³³ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, 157-158.

their popularity and function as a disciplining venue, as they lost their ability to encourage spiritual formation training.

The traditions of the Korean church – praying relentlessly as if wrestling with the Lord Himself in deep mountains – have become faint, and as a result, prayer centers, which were erected to serve such praying habits, have found themselves on the path to failure and downfall. Now, only the prayer centers with sophisticated and convenient equipment are in business. Instead of the prayer centers that encourage long-term fasting prayers, those that provide good food and relaxation are in business. Believers no longer put their lives on the line for praying, as they once did in the past.³⁴

As the number of people visiting prayer centers decreased, the spiritual development through prayer centers and disciplines of abstinence were forgotten. Instead, disciplines of engagement, which focus on Bible studies, became the major contributors to developing the spirituality of the Korean church.

Evaluating Disciplines of Engagement in Korean Churches

I pose no doubt that disciplines of engagement have served as a major and fundamental cause for the explosive growth of the Korean church. As mentioned above, the growth by disciplines of engagement was preceded by the growth through revivals and Bible classes prior to the 1980s. I wholeheartedly concur that when the traditional methods of spiritual formation training could no longer exert any influence on the Korean church, discipleship training, evangelism, Bible study, and Quiet Time have continued the growth of the Korean church. Not only that, but the disciplines of engagement made an individual's spiritual growth possible by offering a biblical way for Korean Christians to integrate their spirituality into their everyday lives. Also, social activities proposed and implemented by the Korean church, such as overseas evangelism or social volunteering

³⁴ Hunyeong Lee, "Cheonggyesan Gidowoneseo Dansang (The contemplation in Cheonggyesan prayer center)," <http://blog.naver.com/dfgiyo?Redirect=Log&logNo=140122101183>. (accessed September 12, 2012).

works, have contributed greatly to the growth of the Korean society.

But as seen in the decline of prayer centers and their campaigns, the growth without the disciplines of abstinence only produced a growth ideology and such growth limited the opportunities for the Korean church to show to the society what a real Christian spirituality consists of. No longer was the Korean church an object of interest to the public – rather, it became an object for criticism. The Korean church is failing to produce effective answers and solutions to new changes and challenges. These answers and solutions can only be created by introducing and including the benefits of disciplines of abstinence to disciple training. It will be beneficial to the Korean church to apply the disciplines of abstinence, which are currently attracting much attention from the modern day population.

Disciplines of Abstinence

The relationship between disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence cannot be separated. However, most Korean churches cannot maintain the balance. To meet the demand for change in discipleship training, disciplines of abstinence have to be applied. Through the model of spiritual disciplines, Korean churches can restore their essence.

Disciplines of Abstinence as Proposed by Dallas Willard

Willard's book, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, explains abstinence very clearly.³⁵ This book was written to introduce the basic theological foundation and background of disciplines. The author proposes that the potential of discipleship training is determined not only by the grace of God, but also by

³⁵ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, 159-175.

applying a new way of living as inspired by the Holy Spirit, which dwells in us as a result of our accepting Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Not only that, but Willard's book explains the basic structure of discipleship training, as well as provides historical assessment and evaluation of discipleship training. Also, the author explains the basic concepts of achieving a rightful discipleship training, while simultaneously offers information to the reader to help understand what it entails.

Willard defines disciplines of abstinence as restraining oneself from carnal instincts, such as hunger, desire for sleep, curiosity, and sexual indulgence, as well as desires for convenience, compromise, materialistic stability, fame, and reputation for the kingdom of God. Methods of disciplines of abstinence include solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, secrecy, and sacrifice.³⁶ When scrutinized, these methods are foreign to many Korean Protestant Christians, as they have been exposed and accustomed to the prosperity theology, which has largely focused only on expanding the size of the church. For such reason, disciplines of abstinence have naturally been neglected, and disciple training continued with its main focus only on disciplines of engagement. Also, disciplines of abstinence were construed to have started in the during the Medieval period in the now-named Catholic church, and it has been criticized for skewing training toward individualism and mysticism.

However, Willard shows very clearly in his book the relationship between disciplines of abstinence and discipleship training, and he endeavors to define what a "Holy Life" is. He states that "the disciplines are activities of mind and body

³⁶ Ibid., 159-160.

purposefully undertaken... with the divine order.”³⁷ In other words, the conception that only focuses on spiritual and internal dimensions of discipleship training must be overthrown, and an effort to see and correctly understand the body must be added. This shows that in order to train a disciple, both disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence must be practiced simultaneously. Today’s Korean church is enjoying an inflated pride from the belief that a disciple may easily and rightfully be developed through training in the form of one- to three-year Bible study courses. Making a disciple is not a short program but a life-long process. However, there are many discrepancies in the Korean church’s educational systems to make true disciples. A complete disciple can only be achieved by employing both disciplines.

John Wesley’s Disciplines of Abstinence

I have mentioned that it is crucial for the Korean church to utilize disciplines of abstinence to discipleship training. The best example of disciplines of abstinence is Wesley’s small group movement, which in fact has formed the basis of today’s discipleship training. The Wesleyan model of small group campaign consists of well-balanced group meetings, which is contradictory to today’s overly skewed disciplines, which relies heavily on disciplines of engagement, namely Bible studies. The model in fact was based strictly on disciplines of abstinence to ensure a holy life. The importance and emphasis on disciplines of abstinence were included in the operations of the Holy Club, which also showed the importance of fasting in its small group meetings:

They have increased the number of meetings from four times a week to six times a week, and they read classic Greek and Latin literatures. They also read theological literatures on Sunday evenings. They also agreed to fast twice a week – on Wednesdays and Fridays. They eventually met every evening to read

³⁷ Ibid., 68.

together and shared with each other the day's activities. They always began their meetings with a prayer and ended with a modest supper.³⁸

Wesley continued to adhere to one of the rules of the Holy Club – the fasting rule, which required the members to “agree to fast twice a week – on Wednesdays and Fridays.”

However, fasting is often not done in today's disciple training, and its importance is being overlooked. Not only that, we must learn from Wesley that self-reflection is an essential part of spiritual formation training.

Wesley's other book, *The Character of a Methodist*, shows a similar emphasis on disciplines of abstinence:

He cannot, therefore, ‘follow’ even ‘a multitude to do evil.’ He cannot ‘fare sumptuously every day,’ or ‘make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.’ He cannot ‘lay up treasures upon earth,’ any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot ‘adorn himself,’ on any pretense, ‘with gold or costly apparel.’ He cannot join in or countenance any diversion which has the least tendency to vice of any kind. He cannot ‘speak evil’ of his neighbor, any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of any one; for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak ‘idle words;’ ‘no corrupt communication’ ever ‘comes out of his mouth,’ as is all that ‘which is’ not ‘good to the use of edifying,’ not ‘fit to minister grace to the hearers.’³⁹

As a result, the spirituality of Wesley and other Methodists then resulted from well-balanced small group meetings. For this reason, Wesley's small group meetings are still serving as an exemplary form of discipleship training, not only in England, but also in other parts of the world.

On the other hand, most of the small group meetings or discipleship training performed in today's Korean church is based on disciplines of engagement rather than on

³⁸ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 8, 3rd ed. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1984), 348; quoted in Hong Sungcheol, *John Wesley-ui Hyogwajeokin Sogeurupundong-ui Hyeosunggwajeong* (The Effective Formation Process of John Wesley's Small Group) *Sinhakgwa SunGyo* 20 (1995): 264.

³⁹ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 8 [CD-ROM] (OR: The Sage Digital Library Collected, 1996), 406.

discipline of abstinence, and this phenomenon has destroyed the balance of the two forms of disciplines. For instance, Watson's famous book, *Discipleship*, which is considered widely as the textbook for discipleship training, overly highlights Bible studies and disciplines of engagement. Simplified life lessons discuss only briefly frugality, and therefore extend some form of balance, but it could be safely said that the overall tone of the book is based on the disciplines of engagement, which poses difficulty in providing balanced spiritual nourishment.

For many reasons, discipleship training in the Korean church has focused only on disciplines of engagement. It should have benchmarked Wesley's well-balanced spiritual formation training by utilizing both disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence, but it did not. It is a relief that its disciplines of engagement methods were based on Bible studies and QT to emphasize the assurance of salvation and a correct understanding of the Bible. However, the church's disciple training lacks too much content in the disciplines of abstinence to create a complete campaign for making a true Christians.

It is certain that, as Wesley once preached, prayer and studying the scripture serve as the most effective and qualifying methods of receiving God's grace.⁴⁰ Along with such efforts, Christians also should diligently study the Bible and train people to become holy. Therefore, the reader must remember Wesley's self-reflection, which he emphasized and used during his small group meetings.

1. To be at church and at the Lord's table every week, and at every public meeting of the Bands.
2. To attend the ministry of the word every morning, unless distance, business, or sickness prevent.

⁴⁰ Ibid., vol. 5. 272.

3. To use private prayer every day; and family prayer, if you are at the head of a family.
4. To read the Scriptures, and meditate therein, at every vacant hour.
5. To observe, as days of fasting or abstinence, all Fridays in the year.⁴¹

Wesley did not indulge in simply knowing the Bible. He showed a greater interest in living and applying the teachings of the Bible. And he witnessed greater and more significant changes when he disciplined his followers in such a way.

Summary

This chapter has mentioned the need for the previously compromised methods, which only focused on Bible studies, to be utilized with disciplines of abstinence for better balanced discipleship training. In other words, a true discipleship program for a church community must utilize both sides of individual spiritual formation training: disciplines of engagement such as individual Bible study, and disciplines of abstinence such as reflection and prayer. For a deeper growth and maturity, the benefits of spiritual formation training must be enhanced. This training can produce a significant change only when used with spiritual formation training that endeavors for an utterly complete change. A positive result may be anticipated and expected only when such training is applied as a continuous effort.

Disciplines of abstinence may be a great tool to remedy the shortcomings of the current discipleship training. Also, it may help to achieve a holier life by allowing one to experience Christ more directly. This is because although spirituality and holiness have different definitions, they serve an identical purpose. In other words, spirituality and holiness have a close relationship, for they share the same goal of allowing a believer to know and resemble after Jesus Christ. This shall be the main point of the next chapter.

⁴¹ Ibid., vol. 8. 308.

CHAPTER 4

SPIRITUAL FORMATION TRAINING THAT LEADS TO THE LIFE OF HOLINESS

The purpose of spiritual formation training is to find Christ within our souls and to be like him. This is the very way to the life of holiness. Rightly understanding the meaning of spiritual formation training will assist Korean churches that live in the era of intellectual technology to have a deeper Christian identity and an influence on Korean society as well. Therefore, spiritual formation training as a way of holiness will be addressed in this chapter.

Definition of Spirituality

The meaning and function of spiritual formation training comes from defining this concept correctly. In general, it is impossible to define “spirituality” with one word or sentence. Spirituality can mean a lot of different things. Therefore, I will be dealing specifically with Christian spirituality.

In order to understand Christian spirituality, it is helpful for us to understand the use in churches of words with similar definitions, such as piety and devotion. These words are widely used by Korean Christians. In Korean churches, due to the influence of dichotomistic faith, Christians have a tendency to think of spirituality as the opposite of flesh. Though a few churches and Christians still use the terms piety or devotion, the influence of these words today is not as significant to Korean Christians compared to 30

years ago. Thus, it is useful to use the word spirituality instead of piety or devotion in terms of spiritual formation training because the word has been welcomed and used by Korean Christians. In particular, properly defining Christian spirituality will be beneficial for Korean churches in order to bring about transformation and revival.

Kenneth D. Boa has recognized that there are 12 approaches to Christian spirituality, and that biblical spirituality should be Christ-centered. He has defined spirituality as relying on the helping power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in every element of life.⁴² He has emphasized that the process of spirituality is not an isolated incident, but a spiritual pilgrimage with Christ while one lives on earth.

The Dictionary of Christian Spirituality has been published as an encyclopedia for study for the better understanding of spirituality. The first half deals with the comprehension of spirituality and the latter with terminology for practical usage. The primary contribution of this book has been to set free the narrow and parochial concept of the understanding Christian spirituality. It defines Christian spirituality as follows:

Spirituality can be understood in two ways. In a narrow point of view, spirituality is experiences of God through direct contact such as the presence of God, voice of God, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. The broader meaning of spirituality includes everything relating with God: worship, church property, and evangelism.⁴³

This book provides general knowledge on the variety of views on the background of spirituality. Glen G. Scorgie has insisted that “Christian spirituality can be sustained through the teaching ministry in the churches. Without teaching, faith, hope and love

⁴² Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (MI: Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2001), 19.

⁴³ Glen G. Scorgie, *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (MI: Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2011), 27~29.

cannot grow.”⁴⁴ Thus, the development of Christian spirituality depends on the vitality of teaching ministry, whether in Korean society or Western society. Bible study and discipleship training in Korean churches has led to maturing faith and church growth. However, there should be a new paradigm shift from previous methods of discipleship training because the world is changing.

Christian spirituality by Alister E. McGrath helps us to understand spirituality clearly. For instance, McGrath has articulated the difference between “mystery” and “spirituality.” He has explained that “mystery” focuses on the experiential aspect, but “spirituality” includes the aspect of knowledge as well. Furthermore, it introduces the importance of image which has a significant role in spirituality. The book helps explain how early Christians understood spirituality through image and model.

McGrath has suggested that spirituality contains not only “concept” as religious contents but also “life” as the holistic experience.” Therefore, Christian spirituality is not only a fundamental concept of Christianity, but also the life experience of a Christian faith as a whole. He has illustrated this as follows:

Christian spirituality concerns the quest for a fulfilled and authentic Christian existence, involving the bringing together of the fundamental ideas of Christianity and the whole experience of living on the basis of and within the scope of the Christian faith..⁴⁵

The author simplifies spirituality in one sentence. “Spirituality is a life that meets Jesus Christ.”⁴⁶

Eugene H. Peterson helps Christians to have an appropriate biblical concept of

⁴⁴ Ibid., 87.

⁴⁵ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Spirituality an Introduction* (MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998), 2.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 16.

spirituality. He has explained the dangers of when Christians do not have a proper understanding of spirituality. He has warned that Christians might recognize spiritual experience as mere ornaments of faith because they have too much curiosity about the soul and are self-absorbed in discipleship training. He has described spirituality thusly:

Spirituality is something that we focus on the invisible inside of our being which is our soul. This soul is the pith of our identity as an image of God that expresses nobleness and uniqueness of spiritual existence. ... Your desire to be holy, good, and honest is truly beautiful but you are not the center of spirituality. The center is God manifested in Jesus.⁴⁷

Peterson's definition of spirituality assists us in understanding "Christian spirituality" based on the biblical background with the essence of spirituality. As he already has mentioned above, the center of spirituality is God as manifested in Jesus.

The Meaning and Role of Spiritual Formation Training

Understanding the meaning and role of spiritual formation training helps us to comprehend spirituality appropriately. Korean churches need to know why they need spiritual formation training and the role they serve, because they are often reluctant to receive disciple training due to negative thoughts toward it.

For instance, according to a news report, the Rev. Dongwon Lee said that he will not practice spiritual formation training, including contemplation, even though he was the one who had introduced spiritual formation training into Korean churches. He had taken the initiative and led an evangelical contemplation movement among Korean churches even though some were critical that the contemplative prayer that he had led had a penchant toward the New Age movement, Catholicism, and pantheism. He articulated

⁴⁷ Eugene H. Peterson, "Mueosi Jalnotoen Sinhaginga (What is the wrong theology)," *Mokhoewa Sinhag*, December, 1998, http://moksinsin.duranno.com/common/news/listbody.asp?a_gb=&a_cd=&a_item=&admin=&key=%BF%B5%BC%BA&keyfield=all&check_line=&po_no=30550 (accessed November 12, 2012).

that he would lay aside the contemplative prayer movement for a while due to criticism and the negative perception of discipleship training.⁴⁸ The news article illustrates well how deep the negative view of discipleship training is. Thus, it is necessary to establish a proper understanding of the meaning and purpose of discipleship training.

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, in her book, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, has described the spiritual disciplines that have been adopted and implemented from the early church. She has insisted that the spiritual disciplines have provided ways of walking with Jesus to all churches throughout generations and cultures. Her book pointed out that it is the Holy Spirit, rather than the spiritual discipline itself, that works in believers and helps them to be like Christ. She has asserted, "Spiritual disciplines can only lead us into places where Christians respond to the word of God, which directs us to where God is."⁴⁹ Her assertion cautions us that too much optimistic acceptance of the spiritual disciplines is a panacea. However, her emphasis on the need of spiritual disciplines helps us to see their importance.

Likewise, Willard, in *The Renovation of Heart*, has suggested that "We can say, in a preliminary manner, that spiritual formation for the Christian basically refers to the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself."⁵⁰ Any spiritual discipline without the foundation of Christ can bring changes that lead to legalism. To him, the most important

⁴⁸ Dongwon Lee, "Gwansanggido Semina Haji Anketa(I do not give a lecture on contemplative prayer)," *Christians Today*, July 6, 2011, <http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=248176> (accessed April 21, 2012).

⁴⁹ Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 19.

⁵⁰ Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (CO: NavPress, 2002), 22.

aspect is following and obeying Christ.

Richard J. Foster has claimed the same. In his book, *Celebration of Discipline*, he has affirmed the following.

The needed change within us is God's work, not ours. The demand is for an inside job, and only God can work from the inside. ... We do not need to be hung on the horns of the dilemma of either human works or idleness. God has given us the disciplines of the spiritual life as a means of receiving his grace.⁵¹

He has insisted that it is not human will or power, but God's work that brings changes in human beings; however, he has emphasized that the changes come through a process of spiritual disciplines.

Henri J. M. Nouwen has explained that the meaning and goal of spiritual disciplines is to find out where each person is and experience the work of God at the same time. Also, he has described the goal of spiritual formation trainings as the development of the capacity to live spiritually from the heart.⁵² His understanding is different from Calhoun or Foster, who emphasized the limitation of human beings and the work of God that brings change. Nouwen's book focuses on the training itself and its positive side.

Spiritual formation trainings that have been practiced in Korea have often been criticized because they focus too much on selfish motivations. They did not emphasize the responsibility of Korean society as a member of society. Seongcheon Oh representatively has insisted that spiritual formation trainings have not gone beyond the individual perspective. He has argued that spiritual formation training should be done for

⁵¹ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The path to Spiritual Growth* (NY: HarperCollins, 1998), 6-7.

⁵² Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Yeonseong Sueop* (Spiritual direction) (Seoul: Duranno, 2007), 10-11.

the expansion of the Kingdom of God through the vitalization of church community.

“Individual perspective has been dominant in terms of discipleship training programs. ... Spiritual discipline programs should include not only individuals but also groups and communities so that church communities can stand towards the world.”⁵³ This is similar to what Wesley emphasized about the personal holy life of Christians; for the life of holiness includes social service and social responsibility as parts of social holiness. To bring change in churches and society, discipleship training should be done beyond the realm of the individual, and emphasize small groups and church community to guide believers to live ethical lives.

Korean churches have experienced radical changes in the industrial era and the democratization era. They are living in the era of information technology; however, they have fallen into utter confusion because of the rapid changes in society. Revival meetings and Bible teaching had an impact on Korean churches during the pre-industrial era. Discipleship training had been greatly beneficial to Korean churches for the attainment of identity as Christians through the process of democratization of Korea. However, there has not been anything conspicuous in the information age that has influenced Korean churches or helped form their identity.

Spiritual formation training will challenge Christians to clarify not only their identities as Christians, but also their behavior patterns as disciples of Jesus. Seongcheon Oh mentions that “Even though they discipline Christians, they only focus on the value of consciousness, and meaning for living as Christians with the biblical worldview.

⁵³ Seongcheon Oh, “Haitekeunolreoji-Sidae-ui Gyohoe Yeongseonghulryeon Silje (The real spiritual discipline of church in high technology of the age),” *Mokhoewa Sinhag*, October, 1993, http://moksins.duranno.com/common/news/listbody.asp?a_gb=&a_cd=&a_item=&admin=&key=%BF%B5%BC%BA%C8%C6%B7%C3&keyfield=all&check_line=&po_no=28104.

Therefore the purpose of spiritual formation training is to modify one's worldview with a new identity."⁵⁴ He has insisted that all kinds of discipleship training are meant to establish Christian identity. Spiritual formation training will provide not only a new identity for Christians in the information age, but will allow them to experience the transformation of the inner being toward a holy life. Furthermore, as Wesley emphasized social service and responsibility as social holiness, the disciplines of abstinence will provide not only the experience of God, but also will provide order in the believer's life.

Definition of Holiness

Donald L. Alexander has written about the sins that cause integral problems of conflict for all people. He has given three basic perspectives and differences of holiness as a solution toward sin. He has articulated three different views of how to overcome matters of sin and move toward a holy life. The first is a perspective from Martin Luther's stance: that a holy life is possible through the grace of God by faith alone. The second perspective comes from the Reformist tradition that suggests that a holy life is attainable through not only faith but also the responsible doing. The third perspective is from the Wesley and Pentecostal traditions that assert that only the work of the Holy Spirit can bring holiness.⁵⁵ Alexander's book reveals that the ways to be holy are different, but we can find the possibility of holiness through this book.

Myeongsu Park's book *Modern Evangelical's Holiness* helps readers grasp the holiness movement in Korean churches. He has mentioned that holiness in South Korean churches is based on the nineteenth century evangelicalism of the United States. Unlike

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Donald L. Alexander, *Christian Spirituality: Five views of sanctification* (Illinois: IVP Academic, 1988).

Wesley, John Calvin believed genuine holiness could not be achieved due to the sinfulness of humans.⁵⁶ However, he believed that through union with Christ a holy life is possible.

A clear understanding of “holiness” can be found in Wesley’s essay, “Christian Perfection.” Wesley has acknowledged holiness and perfection as one. He has explained that perfection means to love God wholeheartedly. He also has asserted that there is no evil personality in the soul of the person who loves God wholly and the words and thoughts of the person are governed by genuine love.⁵⁷ He also has shown that this holiness can be attained by faith, yet piety expressed through prayer, fasting, self-denial, and obedience are necessary to attain holiness. Therefore, we can find various methods and models of spiritual formation training toward holiness from Wesley.

George D. Watson sees the concept of “holiness” as an elimination of depravity in humans, so that he has emphasized getting rid of original sin or depravity of humans. He has said, “Holiness cannot be accomplished by human power alone, but rather by the help of the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁸ He has mentioned the baptism of the Holy Spirit and has underscored holiness as an ethical practice of life that includes the entire realm of human activity.⁵⁹ As a result, there can be many paths toward holiness, yet appropriate instruction and guidance in spiritual formation training is required.

One of the books that help us to have a clear understating of holiness in our daily

⁵⁶ Myeongsu Park, *Keundae Bokeumjuui-ui Seonggyeolron* (Holiness of the modern evangelicalism) (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society, 1997), 21-23.

⁵⁷ John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 6, 14-36.

⁵⁸ George D. Watson, *SeongKyeol* (Holiness) (Seoul: Eunseong, 1988), 37-40.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

life application is *The Holiness Manifesto*.⁶⁰ This book informs us of the importance of understanding internal holiness as well as understanding the chronological background of the times of Jesus. It enlarges the application of holiness not only for religious meaning but also for social holiness. It illustrates that saving paper and recycling resources can restore the holiness of earth. This book gives a broader perspective in the application of holiness.

John Hartley has illustrated holiness so that contemporary people can understand it. He has put an emphasis on the idea that “holiness” is the distinct nature of God that separates God from others. God being God is holiness and it is God’s unique characteristic. The holiness of God cannot be found anywhere in the universe except in God. Thus, even humans do not have the capacity to fathom holiness. In order to help us to understand the concept of holiness, Hartley has used two words: “*mysterium*” and “*tremendum*” from Otto Rudolf’s book, *The Idea of the Holy*.⁶¹ He has defined holiness as something spiritual and wonderful that overwhelms and draws us, into yet it is still something humans cannot grasp. His definition of holiness lets us know that it has something to do with the purpose and goal of spiritual formation training mentioned above. Nouwen has stated in his book, *Spiritual Direction*, “spiritual disciplines methods are the skills that enable us to see the image of God inside us. Spirituality development is to give keen attention to the work of God, the greatest sculptor... as a matter of fact, even leaders are spectators overwhelmed by the works.”⁶² In other words, participating in

⁶⁰ Kevin W. Mannoia and Don Thorsen, ed., *The Holiness Manifesto* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2008).

⁶¹ John Hartley, “Holiness of God” (Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA, November 11, 2012).

⁶² Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Yongseong Sueop* (Spiritual Direction), 34.

spiritual formation training can guide us to fathom holiness and can be a good way to be holy.

Relationship between Spiritual Formation Training and Holiness

Spirituality and holiness have a strong correlation. This is because these two topics have the same purpose. The purpose of spiritual formation training is to find Christ in us and be like him. Likewise, the goal of a holy life is to be perfect like Christ. However, to attain this, there must be clear understandings of spiritual formation training and holiness. In other words, we need to elucidate in which areas the two of them are discrete. It is helpful for us to understand “spiritual formation training” and “holiness” before analyzing the relationship between them.

Similarities between Spirituality and Holiness

It is not easy to illuminate or fathom the exact meaning or concept of spirituality because the range of its definition is too broad. Many people from the religions in the world today cite spirituality, but their usages are equivocal and different from each other, and that clouds people’s ability to grasp spirituality. This is why this thesis defines “spirituality” as “Christian spirituality.” In the same way, understanding holiness is difficult.

Besides, there are various understandings of holiness according to the respective denominations. Hartley’s understanding of holiness of God in particular shows that humans cannot fathom holiness because God’s holiness exists as God’s distinctive nature. Therefore, people cannot understand holiness and only through parables or inference can they understand it. In this way, spirituality and holiness have something in common: they are difficult to grasp.

Secondly, even though spirituality and holiness cannot be achieved by human efforts, they are the ones that Christians should seek after. Just as I mentioned that according to the traditional Reformed point of view genuine holiness is impossible, holy life is possible through the union with Christ in our soul. As mentioned already, Foster said, there can be any change by the power and will of human beings in light of spiritual formation training and at the same time, they can be done through the process of spiritual formation training.

Peterson has explained that our inner being is not a spiritual reality, but that Christ living in us is the spiritual reality. Consequently, he has asserted, finding Jesus Christ and resembling him is possible. He has described what the reality is as follows: “Our spiritual guide, you are wonderful, glorious, and special soul. Holiness and kindness and your aspiration for truth are truly beautiful. Nevertheless, you are not the integral part of spirituality. The integral part is God manifested in Jesus.”⁶³ True spirituality, in other words, Protestant spirituality, draws our attention on ourselves toward Jesus. Spirituality and holiness are the same in that they are not achieved by human effort or will, but by the work of God through training and a life of practice.

Differences between Spirituality and Holiness

Although when looking more closely we see that there are many similarities between spirituality and holiness, there are also different aspects and characteristics. Spirituality has a unique characteristic that separates piety and devotion as well. The Korean church still prefers the terms piety and devotion to spirituality because it places more emphasis on the result of faith rather than the motives of faith. Church growth takes

⁶³ Eugene H. Peterson, “Mueosi Jalmotoen Sinhag-inga (What is the wrong theology).”

place as a result of faith. Therefore, some churches are steeped in legalism. In contrast, spiritual disciplines focus more on the inner being. The difference is a reason why Korean Christians do not accept spiritual formation training with ease.

First of all, when holiness and spiritual disciplines are compared, the meaning of the word spirituality itself is different. It places a more significant emphasis on the individual side, while holiness focuses more on the community. Most methods of spiritual discipline such as *lectio divina*, and *meditatio* originated from Catholic monasteries during the fifteenth century. They have had the intention of self-development in spirituality, not community or church. Therefore, these spiritual disciplines focus more on the inner side of our souls than holiness does, because holiness is more concerned with behavior or morality. Additionally, since these spiritual disciplines originate in the Catholic tradition, they are viewed as outside their own (Korean) traditions. For these reasons, spiritual formation training has not been accepted easily by Korean churches.⁶⁴

There is also a difference between traditional pastoral works, or discipleship training, and spiritual disciplines or the spiritual development movement when it comes to the primary focus of each. Spiritual disciplines put more weight on the personal aspect. In other words, spiritual disciplines are based on individual spirituality rather than community spirituality, and its curriculum focuses on the individualistic side. Spiritual disciplines in the Korean church are not as well developed as in the United States or European countries. It is because the U.S. and European countries put more value on individualism as opposed to South Korea and other Asian countries. However, spiritual

⁶⁴ Seongi Bang, "Jejahulryeon-gwa Yeongseong (Disciple training and spirituality)," *Mokhoewa Sinhag*, December, 1990, http://moksinsin.duranno.com/common/news/listbody.asp?a_gb=&a_cd=&a_item=&admin=&key=%BF%B5%BC%BA&keyfield=all&check_line=&po_no=26818.

disciplines that focus on personal aspects can be recognized as discrete religious training in Korean society in which “we”⁶⁵ as a community have special meaning.

Secondly, spiritual disciplines focus more on mysticism than holiness, while holiness emphasizes that social responsibility, community service, and morality are not only individual responsibilities, but also those of the community. The practice of spiritual disciplines began in monasteries, not in the churches, which is one of the reasons why most South Korean churches cannot accept it. Therefore, many South Korean Christians have a distorted view of spiritual formation training as mysticism itself, despite the fact that holiness is based on the Protestant tradition with its emphasis on social responsibility and morality.

Spiritual Formation Training to Reach Holiness

The reason for utilizing and emphasizing disciple training in Korean churches should be to help one to achieve the truly holy life that the Korean churches have hitherto aspired to accomplish. In other words, discipleship training must accompany spiritual formation training to allow one to experience and achieve holiness. Additionally, the spiritual formation training that includes the disciplines of abstinence as well as the disciplines of engagement should be taught and practiced to reach true holiness. Such spiritual formation training leads one to engage in specific behaviors for living a holy life which may be characterized as long-neglected.

As already mentioned, spirituality and holiness are difficult to define, as they are unachievable when endeavored solely with human capabilities. However, they are

⁶⁵ Daniel J. Newman, “Research and Design” (Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA, September 27, 2010). See, Daniel J. Newman, “Uri as Contextual Theology for the Korean Church and Its Mission” (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary), 2005.

identical in the sense that they must be aspired to. Also, even though spiritual formation training has its individualistic and mystic characteristics, it should nonetheless be utilized to develop more well-balanced discipleship training.

Spiritual Formation Training for Self-Reflection in Jesus Christ

Until now, we have established an understanding that spiritual formation training leads us to see both our inner values as well as Jesus as our inner reality. However, to integrate spiritual formation training into the Korean church, one must find Jesus in one's self, as well as one's self in Jesus. Further, a sense of social responsibility that highlights community over individuals must also be included. In addition, spiritual formation training must be developed to help one not only to see but also to experience Christ. Willard has commented as such to define the true nature of spiritual development. "We who have been rescued 'from the power of darkness and transferees... into the kingdom of his beloved Son' (Colossians 1:13, NRSV) are to 'let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 2:5, KJV). This is an essential way of describing the substance, the underlying reality, of Christian spiritual formation."⁶⁶ A holy life starts when one meets Christ, not when he or she simply sees Him. For this reason, Dietrich Bonhoeffer has commented as such regarding the importance of self-reflection in Christ: "Our salvation is 'external to ourselves.' I find no salvation in my life history, but only in the history of Jesus Christ. Only he who allows himself to be found in Jesus Christ, in his incarnation, his Cross, and his resurrection, is with God and God with him."⁶⁷ It is comforting to know that spiritual formation training may help one to reflect on his or her

⁶⁶ Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ*, 98.

⁶⁷ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The classic Exploration of Christian Community*, trans. John W. Doberstein (NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1954), 54.

inner self in the midst of today's busy society. However, the Korean church must not be content at having its followers merely reflect on their inner selves; it must discipline its followers to see Christ and emphasize the sense of community in order to make spiritual formation training more accessible and acceptable to the society.

If the quality of spiritual formation training that hitherto has been passed down - a training that indulges in no better than simply knowing one's inner life - continues to dominate the Korean church, it cannot be free from outside criticisms that point at its apparent individualism and subjectivity. However, instructing and disciplining one to reflect on his or her inner self through church traditions and communal traits are much needed because today's widely recognized spiritual disciplining practices, such as "meditation," "yoga," and "spiritual realization," are rooted in secular origins. Therefore, discipleship training should gear itself toward reflecting and meditating on one's inner self in Christ through church traditions and in community, and not toward simply emphasizing the inner world.

Emphasis on Community-Centered Spiritual Formation Training

To see one's inner self in spiritual formation training, solitude has to precede. Many monks knowingly left civilization for deserts and wilderness because they learned that they cannot find true solitude in mundane lives. This is the reason for emphasizing an individual's inner life. Thomas Merton has identified clearly his stance on this issue in his book *Contemplation in a World of Action*:

The element of 'distance' from the ordinary unthinking way of life-the element of solitude, withdrawal 'into the desert,' of silence, of asceticism, of poverty, humility, obedience -all this is necessary for the monk. But why?... It is not a matter of putting up a front or even of making a contract (to live austerely) and then living

up to it. The reasons for discipline lie deeper.⁶⁸

An emphasis on separation for a deeper and more profound discipline in solitude is a necessity. However, it is difficult to stay afar from daily life for a long time. Also, coercing Christians to distance themselves from the society for solitude has no value. Bonhoeffer has commented as such regarding Christians living in isolation. "So the Christian, too, belongs not in the seclusion of a cloistered life but in the thick of foes."⁶⁹ He also has warned those who are isolating themselves from the society with the words he borrowed from Martin Luther:

The Kingdom is to be in the midst of your enemies. And he who will not suffer this does not want to be of the Kingdom of Christ; he wants to be among friends, to sit among roses and lilies, not with the bad people but the devout people. O you blasphemers and betrayers of Christ! If Christ had done what you are doing who would ever have been spared?⁷⁰

Separation and isolation from the routine life is a necessity, but they must be temporary. Also, if solitude successfully integrates with the church community, their synergy will serve as an effective spiritual formation training that will aid Christians to reach true holiness where an individual and the community to which he belongs will resemble Christ like never before.

Spiritual Formation Training that Focuses on the Holy Scriptures

Discipleship training until now has had a weakness in its tendency to only minister by education. However, with reason alone people cannot fully understand and

⁶⁸ Thomas Merton, *Contemplation in a World of Action* (IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 98-99.

⁶⁹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 17.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 17-18.

fathom God, who is limitless. John S. Park has insisted that we have a limitation of knowing God.

Infinite God cannot be fully understood by finite human cognitive knowledge. We may discuss the idea of God and conclude the idea in our own human way of defining God. Whether we define God rationally, empirically, or multifariously, God still exists in his own way and *theos* part remains divine.⁷¹

For this reason, we cannot experience God in His entirety when we solely rely on logical reason.

Still, the importance of discerning the instructions of the Bible in discipleship training cannot be overemphasized. When we digress from the Bible's instructions, discipleship training, and nourishment, our learning about Christ and becoming like Him will become an impossible task. To make the previously mentioned tasks possible and achievable, learning and teaching the Bible shall be emphasized and implemented more.

Bonhoeffer has commented as such to teaching and learning about the Bible:

It is not our heart that determines our course, but God's Word. But who in this day has any proof? How often we hear innumerable arguments 'from life' and 'from experience' put forward as the basis for most crucial decisions, but the argument of Scripture is missing. And this authority would perhaps point in exactly the opposite direction.⁷²

If, as he mentioned already, the Korean church only highlights spiritual and supernatural experiences, it will never be free from criticisms that point out its inconsistency, subjectivity, and mysticism. To make spiritual formation training more active and widely recognized, the Korean church should focus on the instructions of the Bible, as well as correctly reading, memorizing, and meditating on the Bible.

⁷¹ John S. Park, ed., *Holiness as A Root of Morality: Essays on Wesleyan Ethics* (NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 45.

⁷² Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 55.

Summary

Despite differences between spirituality and holiness, spiritual disciplines also have similarities to holiness. Spirituality and holiness cannot be achieved by human effort. However, they are the ones that Christians should seek after. Spiritual formation training allows one not only to reflect on his or her inner being, but also to experience and achieve holiness. To help Christians learn holiness, teaching the Bible should be emphasized and implemented more, as well as encouraging Christians in reading, memorizing, and meditating on the Bible.

CHAPTER 5

SECOND PETER 1:3-11 AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION TRAINING

Second Peter was influenced by and reflected Hellenistic values and its eight virtues. The first chapter of the second book of Peter, verses 3-11, lead us to rightfully live the life of holiness and offers readers the correct procession of true spiritual formation training. The book also emphasizes, through one of its verses, “grow in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,” faith-knowledge, which can be acquired only when one lives the life of righteousness and virtue in faith, instead of simply gathering mechanical knowledge of our Lord – *gnosis*.⁷³ This valuable insight reveals the true element of spiritual formation training as well, to which today’s Korean Church should conform.

The need for and the basis of spiritual formation training for a true believer are expressed through 2 Peter 1:3: “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness.”⁷⁴ This verse declares that his divine power already has given us everything we need for spiritual formation training and discipleship training, although we have already become a degenerate and corrupt society. Therefore, we come to clearly understand that the foundation of spiritual formation training is the power of Jesus Christ.

⁷³ Robert, Andre, and Andre Feuillet. Introduction to the New Testament. Translated from the French by Patrick W. Skeehan. New York: Desclee, 1965. 582-583.

⁷⁴ Second Peter 1:3 (NIV), “His divine power has given us everything we for life need and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”

It seems that the purpose of 2 Peter is far more clearly outlined than any other books of the Bible. Therefore, 2 Peter 1:3-11 shows not only the element of spiritual formation but also the direction of spiritual formation training.

Genre and Outline of 2 Peter 1:3-11

Many scholars have questioned the validity and authenticity of the historical background of 2 Peter in the New Testament. It was primarily written to logically respond to skeptical Christian believers who had cast doubt on the end time and Jesus' "*parousia*," which have been tainted and adulterated by false prophets and their wrongful interpretations. Carl R. Holladay has described the reason for which 2 Peter was written as such:

To use the language of Christian doctrine, the issue is the relationship between eschatology - how the church understands the end time - and ethics - its view of the moral life. Second Peter's overriding moral concern is reflected in its reference to Christianity as "the way of truth" (2:2), "the straight road" (2:15), and "the way of righteousness" (2:21) - expressions that accent codes of behavior rather than codes of belief.⁷⁵

From the verses cited we can see that delayed *parousia* had led to some serious immorality among the followers of the Church. Indeed, 2 Peter presents a pessimistic outlook toward the already degenerate world. For instance, according to 2 Peter, the world is "still in darkness" (2 Peter 1:19), has "become a degenerate society" (2 Peter 1:4), and is "filled with self-indulgence and lawless men" (2 Peter 2:7-8).⁷⁶ It also says that people follow the corrupt desires of their sinful nature (2 Peter 1:4; 2:10; 2:18; 3:3). Such are the distinct features of 2 Peter – pointing out false eschatology and thereby

⁷⁵ Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Nashville: Abingdon press, 2005), 510.

⁷⁶ Mark Allan Powell, *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey* (MI: Backer Academic, 2009), 489.

emphasizing Christian ethics.

Holladay further has insisted that the eight virtues as listed in 2 Peter 1:3-11, which belong to the spiritual disciplines, were heavily influenced by Hellenistic values. “The eight virtues, which are seen as successive steps of moral progress beginning with faith and ending with love, reflect highly prized Hellenistic values. As a defining feature of Peter’s legacy, active pursuit of the moral life is required to participate in the divine nature.”⁷⁷ As his criticism claims, these eight virtues reflect Hellenistic values. However, we need to focus on the positive roles these virtues play in the spiritual formation training as they set the direction and establish the procession of spiritual formation training. Furthermore, they are still applicable and must be taught in today’s society.

Mark Allan Powell explained the purpose of 2 Peter as follows: “The author seeks to refute skepticism with regard to Christ’s *parousia* and the concomitant judgment (1:16; 3:1-4), and he encourages his readers to strive for the true godliness that is to be the mark of all true believers (1:3~18).”⁷⁸ In other words, Powell claims that the purpose of 2 Peter was to challenge the readers to live a life of holiness as a mark of being true believers.

Genre

Second Peter can be divided as follows: greeting (1:1-2), a summary of Peter’s message (1:3-11), Peter’s testament (1:12-21), Peter’s prediction of false teachers (2:1-22), Peter’s prediction of the day of the Lord (3:1-16), and conclusion (3:17-18). As mentioned before, 2 Peter 1:3-11 is positioned as a key to understand the entire book of 2

⁷⁷ Carl R. Holladay, *Ibid.*, 512.

⁷⁸ Mark Allan Powell, *Ibid.*, 487.

Peter. In other words, 2 Peter 1:3-11 successfully captures Peter's vision and the principal of his ministry.

The literary elements of these verses also indicate the importance of 2 Peter 1:3-

11. According to Richard J. Bauckham:

The passage 1:3-11 is in form a miniature homily, which follows a pattern used in the farewell speeches of Ezra (in 4 Ezra 14:28-36) and John (in *Acts John* 106-7). ... In the light of the references back to this passage in 1:12, 15, it is clearly intended as a definitive summary of Peter's ethical and religious teaching, set down for the instruction of readers after his death.⁷⁹

Peter's intention in writing Peter 1:12-15 was to highlighting the importance of the preceding verses. As the verses certainly resemble Ezra's farewell speeches, who was a fellow Jewish prophet, Peter might have wanted to present 2 Peter 1:12-15 in a familiar and traditional way in hopes of mitigating any possible resistance.

Outline

His divine power has given us everything (v. 3): It shows us possibility of spiritual formation training.

- I. Propose of calling (v. 4): Participate in the divine nature and escape from corruption
- II. Order to spiritual formation training (vv. 5-7): Direction and Step
Faith – Goodness – Knowledge - Self-control – Perseverance -
Godliness - Brotherly kindness - Love
- III. Two different results of spiritual formation training (v. 8-9).

⁷⁹ Richard J. Bauckham, "Word Biblical Commentary," Jude, 2 Peter. vol. 50, (TX: Word Books, 1983), 132.

1. Positive Response: the fruitful life of the knowledge of Jesus (v. 8).
2. Negative Response: nearsighted, blind, and forgotten forgiveness (v. 9).

IV. Invitation of spiritual formation training (v. 10):

V. Reason of spiritual formation training (v. 11):

1. To never fall (v. 11a)
2. To receive a rich welcome (v. 11b)

As mentioned above, Peter first needed to identify the nucleus of his important message before he ventured into discussing the problems of the early church. To strongly convey his message to the early Christians and explain the purpose of his drafting of the letter, Peter intentionally chose to write these verses as introduction. He also structured 2 Peter as a farewell speech, in an old Jewish literary style, to more persuasively deliver his message. Verses 5, 6, and 7 especially suggest and set the direction and progression of spiritual formation training, which may still be integrated to further develop and improve Korean discipleship trainings and programs. Therefore, 2 Peter 1:3-11 expands to show not only the importance of spiritual formation training, but also serves as a largely representative portion of the entire message.

Message of 2 Peter 1:3-11

Through the message in 2 Peter 1:3-11 Korean churches will know what the essence of spiritual formation training is and how it can provide for well-balanced discipleship.

Knowing Jesus and Spiritual Formation Training

Second Peter in its entirety emphasizes the importance of intimately knowing Jesus. It also provides the foundation of the spiritual formation training. “Knowledge,” in

the sense of knowing Jesus, appears six times (1:2, 3, 5, 6, 8; 3:8) in 2 Peter, four of which come from its first chapter. However, the early church defined “knowledge” differently from how the contemporary church defines the term. According to Everett F. Harrison, “Even in the salutation the author draws attention to his recurring theme of knowledge, which is grounded in turn on faith. Probably knowledge is intended to include the things of the future, which so much of the epistle is concerned”⁸⁰ He has insisted that there is a special meaning of knowledge in 2 Peter and we need to draw attention to the importance of knowledge.

James L. Price has agreed with Everett F. Harrison and he also has insisted that there are meanings beyond the term’s literal definition:

It is probable that the “knowledge of God” was more than a liturgical formula for the writer of 2 Peter. *Gnosis* was a common religious term in our writer’s time. According to the teaching of 2 Peter, a personal acknowledgment of the truth revealed in “Jesus our Lord,” not mystical or mythical speculation, makes for sound and steady growth in all things pertaining “to life and godliness.” Only by such means are men able to “become partakes of the divine nature.”⁸¹

He has explained that 2 Peter’s usage of the term “knowledge” skews more toward *gnosis* which has religious and ritual meanings. In other words, the term “knowledge” is used to represent knowing Jesus at a personal and intimate level, not as knowing Him as a subject of theory, mystery, or imagination.

In no way does “knowledge” in 2 Peter exclusively mean learning biblical dogma and theories, but it also means being taught on how to bring about practical changes to commonly adopted lifestyles and today’s community. Furthermore, the usage of the term

⁸⁰ Everett F. Harrison, “*Introduction to the New Testament*” (MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 390-391.

⁸¹ James L. Price, “*Interpreting the New Testament*” (NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), 513.

“knowledge” in 2 Peter is consistently used synonymously with the phrase “the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord”. In other words, knowledge in its biblical sense not only means the kind of theoretical knowledge that is attainable through Bible studies, which may be used to help one discover his or her Christian identity in modern society, it also means focusing on acquiring specific and practical knowledge through intrinsically experiencing Jesus. Therefore, knowledge in 2 Peter means “wholeness knowledge,” which includes understanding Christ logically, emotionally, and volitionally.

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of spiritual formation training is to find Jesus Christ in our souls and to become like Him. Second Peter parallels this by emphasizing “the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” It means that the goal of 2 Peter is in accordance with that of spiritual formation training. Furthermore, this suggests it is also aligned with the concept of “holy life,” which is repeatedly shown in both 1 and 2 Peter.

Spiritual Formation Training as God’s Gift

Second Peter 1:3 teaches us that spiritual formation training is not a means of suppressing our freedom – it is a gracious gift from God. It shows the grounds and feasibility of spiritual formation training as God’s gift. It also says that spiritual formation training cannot be done by human endeavor or efforts, but solely and exclusively through God’s power. Peter declares all the needed tools for spiritual formation training were already given to us, and this is what we could call “the grace of God.”

Second Peter 1:3-4 use the words “divine power” (2 Pet 1:3) and “divine nature” (2 Pet 1:4). “Divine power (θείας δυνάμεως)” and “divine nature (θείας φύσεως)” tell us what “godliness (εὐσέβεια)” is, as well as the purpose and feasibility of spiritual formation training. The feasibility of spiritual formation training is based not on the

power of the individual Christian, but on the power of God. It means completing spiritual formation training is impossible without the power of God, and we need only to trust the power of God to discern and develop our “divine nature.”

Second Peter 1:3-11 clearly defines the goal of spiritual formation training as the means to achieve participation in the “divine nature (θείας φύσεως).” An unequivocal and precise deliverance of this definition will help to develop spiritual formation training in Korean churches because the Korean church has erroneously developed many criticisms against spiritual formation training. There are numerous Christians who perceive spiritual formation training as self-development or yoga, which are commonly exploited programs that only help people develop their minds. However, 2 Peter argues that spiritual formation trainings are completely different from self-development or yoga. They are God’s gift, and they are the means to participating in God’s nature through the power of God.

The reason for Korean Christians’ resistance against spiritual formation training is because the Korean church itself has propagated an erroneous image of it. Until now, Korean churches coerced Korean Christians to participate in various programs, which have ultimately created a passive, pessimistic, and negative view of them overall. However, 2 Peter teaches us that spiritual formation trainings are a pleasure in themselves because they are God’s gift. Dunnam has insisted the importance of the goal and the necessity of the spiritual disciplines:

So let’s be clear as we begin. Discipline is not an end in itself. In the history of Christianity that thought has not always prevailed, and disciplines themselves have become *the things*. We have made discipline an end, not a means. We have even used it as a proof of our ‘sainthood.’ That is the reason Christianity is often presented as a somber, self-denying, world-denying way that produces pinched faced sadness. Jesus presented something else. He called us to the joy of a

wedding banquet, to the dance of celebration over a lost son who has come home.⁸²

Through this excerpt we can see that Maxie D. Dunman has contended that today's Christians are satisfied with the current training program itself. However, the Korean church has to emphasize the goal of spiritual formation training, which is to participate in the holy life.

Spiritual formation training is a form of training. However, it has to be vastly different from previous methods of discipline. Above all, spiritual formation training as described in 2 Peter is portrayed as a gracious gift from God, which we should take by us as a pleasurable and pleasant form of training. In this respect, Richard J. Foster claim's in his book *Celebration of Discipline* that spiritual formation training gives us pleasure is inarguably correct. "Celebration is central to all the spiritual disciplines. Without a joyful spirit of festivity the disciplines become dull, death breathing tools in the hands of modern Pharisees. Every discipline should be characterized by carefree gaiety and s sense of thanksgiving."⁸³ Pleasure and joy will come as a natural consequence of spiritual formation training. For this reason, Peter insists that spiritual formation training is only possible "through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness (ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ)." It is sufficient pleasure and glory in itself to participate in spiritual formation trainings.

Spiritual formation trainings are a necessity in reaching a holy life. We must remember that spiritual formation training must be used to help one grow in becoming holy and shall not be considered as an end in itself. Dunnam has insisted on this as he has

⁸² Maxie D. Dunnam, *The Workbook on Spiritual Disciplines*, 8.

⁸³ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The path of Spiritual Growth*, 191

defined the necessity and purpose of spiritual formation training: “As Christians we do not emerge full-blown; we grow. We grow by discipline. So let’s be clear as we begin. Discipline is not an end in itself.”⁸⁴ Without spiritual formation trainings, we cannot participate in his divine nature; without participating in divine nature, we cannot reach the holy life as described in 2 Peter. In other words, we cannot learn about and become like Jesus Christ. In fact, knowing the importance of and participating in spiritual formation trainings are themselves acting in obedience to God. Therefore, we must be prudent and be cautious not to forget the purpose of spiritual formation training.

Spiritual Formation Training as a Way to Reach Holiness

As already mentioned earlier, the ultimate purpose of spiritual formation training is to participate in the divine nature. We can participate in the divine nature because God has already given us all the tools we need. In other words, we can participate in spiritual formation training and the divine nature through God’s power and support. Participating in the divine nature means living in holiness. Indeed, spiritual formation training is the best way to reach holiness.

John Hartley has insisted that although it is difficult to clearly define the term holiness, the idea can nevertheless be explained by *mysterium* and *tremendum*.

“*Tremendum* refers to that which is vastly great or to that which has great power ... The *mysterium* is that which is too wonderful for humans to understand. It is something that is utterly amazing, inspiring. Some refer to it as blank wonder. Something draws us out of ourselves. One feels overwhelmed. Such an experience is usually beautiful beyond

⁸⁴ Maxie Dunnam, *The Workbook on Spiritual Disciplines*, 8.

description.”⁸⁵ Holiness, as a mystery beyond description, draws us out of ourselves.

Hartley has suggested metaphorically that accessing holiness is like being plugged into an electric socket. Figuratively speaking, Christians will only have the power to reach holiness if they are “plugged in.” Only then will they have access to being holy. This theory is based on Isaiah 6:6, in which a seraph with a live coal in his hand flew to Isaiah and touched Isaiah’s lips with it. When the coal touched his lips, Isaiah’s guilt was taken away and he became holy.⁸⁶ Therefore, we as Christians should also uphold the eight virtues to reach holiness.

Becoming holy through spiritual formation trainings is both a gift and sovereign work of God. It is clearly supported by the Greek verb, “γένησθε (you might be that by them you may become),” as used in 2 Peter 1: 4 in its past tense and deponent form. Likewise, “δεδώρηται (Are given, or he has granted)” parallels in structure. This structural formation shows that becoming holy through spiritual formation training can be done by gift from God.

However, 2 Peter 1:3-11 emphasizes the responsibility of Christians: “Through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness” (v3). The Greek verse, “through our knowledge of him who called us,” is translated from “δια τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως.” It emphasizes that it is possible to know him through (δια) our knowledge (τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως). “Our knowledge (τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως)” is a singular, feminine, and possessive form of the verb, and it shows the importance of our responsibility in faith and that spiritual formation training does require some degree of

⁸⁵ John Hartley, “Holiness of God.”

⁸⁶ Ibid.

human endeavor. Therefore, becoming holy through spiritual formation training must be balanced between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of Christians.

The compound word spirituality is formed from the words “spirit” and “ability.” We can use spirituality to describe spiritual responsiveness. From this, we can deduce an important principle of spirituality: without spiritual responsiveness, there is no spirituality.⁸⁷ Richard Niebuhr has highlighted the importance of this responsiveness in *The Responsible Self*. He has said that the relationship he had with Jesus greatly influenced his way of thinking. Furthermore, he has claimed that forming his identity as a member of society depended on his understanding of Jesus.⁸⁸ His experience further augments the idea that becoming holy in spiritual formation training must be well-balanced between the sovereignty of God and the responsiveness and responsibility of Christians. Similarly, the purpose of discipleship training lies also in seeking Christian identity. Therefore, the responsiveness and responsibility of Christians are important factors in spiritual formation training.

Responsiveness is a key element in spiritual formation training. How we respond to God in all circumstances proves the type of spirit we possess within. Responsiveness is not limited to an ethical or psychological issue. The essence of spiritual formation training is to train us to respond with faith to God in our lives. Richard Niebuhr has mentioned the importance of responsiveness through faith in his book. The question of our fundamental interpretation is not to be settled, therefore, by asking what word we use, any more than it can be answered by asking about the theories of creation that we employ.

⁸⁷ John S. Park, “Church Renewal” (Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA, October 2, 2011).

⁸⁸ H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self* (NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1978), 42-43.

Our primordial interpretation of the radical action by which we are is made in faith as trust or distrust.⁸⁹ As mentioned above in *The Responsible Self*, faith enables us to interpret who we are and functions as the determining core of our behaviors and decisions. Knowing what we trust or distrust is important in furthering spiritual formation training.

Training oneself to respond in faith to Jesus is in itself spiritual formation training. We can reach holiness by spiritual formation trainings through trust, which is the response to knowing (τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως) Jesus through faith. Self-examination and mysterious, spiritual experiences do not represent spiritual formation training. True spiritual formation training cannot be satisfied with mystical spiritual experience while staying in monasteries because spiritual formation training should be followed by specific and applicable actions within the world. In the end, by developing responsiveness we can spiritually grow. In other words, spiritual disciplines help us make faithful decisions every time we have a choice before God.

The Eight Virtues of Spiritual Formation Training

Second Peter 1:5-7 shows the importance of the eight virtues of spiritual formation training, and it is noteworthy to highlight that these virtues are listed in no particular order as they are closely interconnected with each other. The words *make every effort to add* (ἐπιχορηγήσατε), albeit authoritative, was intended to mean *to incorporate*.

As mentioned before, 2 Peter 1:3-8 shows also what the right direction of spiritual formation training is. We can also use these lessons to develop spiritual formation training. Furthermore, we can know Jesus Christ more deeply and follow him with the eight virtues of spiritual formation training. Even though each of the eight virtues

⁸⁹ Ibid., 119.

discusses a different aspect of spiritual formation training, they are all nevertheless closely connected and linked with each other and together inspire holiness.

As Christians, we cannot afford to neglect or overlook any of the virtues. Although we may already excel in at least one, unless we balance ourselves well among all eight, we cannot say we have become holy. As mentioned before, if we myopically focus on any one particular virtue, we will fall into the danger of self-righteousness. Furthermore, we approach spiritual formation training and their virtues from a sequential perspective. We also may fall into mysticism, as did past spiritual trainers. For examples, although Bernard of Clairvaux⁹⁰ broke down God's love into four stages, it is inappropriate to classify and prioritize the eight virtues of spiritual formation training. Bernard derived the four stages of God's love from his meditations, and they provide us with profound insight into spiritual formation training.

Therefore, the verb "add" (verse 5) should not be taken to be applied in a certain sequential order; rather, it may be applied differently to spiritual formation training in respect to each individual's own circumstances or maturity in faith. Although the eight virtues stand independently from one another, they all have an important bearing in relation to each other. The fact that the eight virtues in 2 Peter 1:5-7 were not listed in such sequence with specific intentions or to reflect their ascending or descending importance within the realm of spiritual formation training shows that they are all necessary and worthy.⁹¹ It only focuses on the importance of participating in his being holy for us to become holy. Spiritual formation training is possible through God's power,

⁹⁰ Bernard of Clairvaux. "on Loving God." <http://leaderu.com/cyber/books/onloving/onlov15.html>

⁹¹ Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of The New Testament*, vol. 7, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1964), 184.

and the ultimate goal is to participate in his divine nature. Both the beginning and end of spiritual formation training depend on God.

Therefore, it is important to keep a strong balance between each of the virtues, even though the virtues are seen as successive steps of moral progress beginning with faith and ending with love. Augustine has highlighted also the importance of balance as such:

In some parts of it certain things are regarded as evil because they do not suit certain others; but these same things do fit in elsewhere, and they are good there and good in themselves. All these things that are at odds with each other belong to the lower part of creation what we call earth, which has its own cloudy, windy sky, as befits it.⁹²

Therefore, spiritual formation training must aim to produce more holistic Christians by addressing weaknesses which have resulted from past incomplete discipleship training programs, and by rightly balancing the eight virtues.

Summary

Second Peter 1:3-11 shows not only what the elements of spiritual formation are, but also what the right direction is for spiritual formation training. Through 2 Peter, we need to draw attention to knowing Jesus logically, emotionally and volitionally, because the Korean church has overemphasized knowing Jesus with only one intelligence. Additionally, the structural formation of 1:3-11 shows that becoming holy is possible, though it not only relies on human effort, but is also the gift of God.

⁹² Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding (NY: New City Press, 1997), 175.

CHAPTER 6

SPIRITUAL FORMATION TRAINING THROUGH SELF-CONTROL AND GODLINESS

All of the eight virtues as described in 2 Peter 1:3-8 are important in spiritual formation training, and each needs to be in carefully balanced with the others. However, among these eight virtues, self-control and godliness are needed critically for today's Korean church. I will explain why self-control and godliness are important and introduce ways to integrate them into the Korean church.

The Need for Self-Control and Godliness

Rapid growth in the Korean church has had a significant impact on not only church members, but discipleship training. Many pastors and elders have focused on their ministry and not so much on the making of true disciples. Many pastors and famous leaders of the Korean church have been accused of passing the leadership of the church from father to son, which is strongly condemned as nepotism. Furthermore, most elders in the Korean church try to prevent this power play. As a result, many people have strong hostilities toward the Korean church and its leaders, and many Korean Christians convert from Christianity to other religions or they leave their church. Hereditary succession has often contributed to scandals. The primary reason is that these Korean church leaders have not embraced or taught the importance of self-control and godliness as part of their

Christian identity. Even still, today many Korean churches are only interested in prosperity theology and blessings. Just the same, most churches are not balanced in the way they teach the disciplines of engagement and the disciplines of abstinence. They only emphasize the disciplines of engagement. For balanced discipleship, self-control and godliness are needed.

These problems are not confined only to the Korean church. However, despite the importance of self-control and godliness, today's Korean society has neglected them. Today, the term self-control is used more often in weight-loss television programs, and the term godliness is being treated as religious jargon. It is then only natural that these terms have little value to the busy people of the 21st century.

However, it should be noted that the lack of self-control and godliness has created many problems and issues around the world. In particular, among the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) affiliated nations, Korea has ranked first in the number of suicides per total population for the last eight years. It has been counted that 33.5 out of 100,000 people have committed suicide in 2000, and this number is approximately 2.6 times higher than an average OECD nation.⁹³ Also, news of celebrities committing suicide is no longer a surprise to the Korean society, and quite shockingly, Korean Christians comprise a large percentage of the population of those who commit suicide. It is believed that when proper spiritual formation training take place within the Korean church, which includes self-control and godliness, the number of suicides committed may decrease.

⁹³ MinHwan Yu, "HanGuk Jasalryu Segye 1-wi ... OECD Pyeogyun-ui 2.6 bae (Top of the world in suicide rate ... 2.6 times the OECD average)," *MunHwailbo*, February 8, 2013. <http://www.munhwa.com/news/view.html?no=20120910MW075551332312> (accessed February 8, 2013).

Self-control and godliness have become an important issue in today's international society as they relate to food shortages. It has been calculated that every 10 seconds, a child dies due to malnutrition and starvation. It is appalling to learn that death due to malnutrition is not an "act of God," but a man-made phenomenon. A significant cause of malnutrition may be the lack of self-control and godliness, for more efficient distribution systems for food from developed countries and within developing countries may help feed the hungry children in developing countries. For this reason, the need for self-control and godliness trainings must be highlighted.

To overcome this dilemma, 2 Peter 1:3-11 introduces eight virtues that are needed for participating in the divine nature. We need to develop all eight virtues to make true disciples. However, self-control and godliness are needed in the Korean church because they are disciplines of abstinence as well as the most important virtues for spiritual formation training. This may be proven through the "fasting" training, for fasting requires high degrees of both virtues. Marjorie J. Thompson also has insisted on the importance of self-control and godliness in her book:

Perhaps we can see, then, that the discipline of fasting has to do with the critical dynamic of accepting those limits which are life restoring. Our culture would seduce us into believing that we can have it all, do it all, and that we deserve it all. Yet in refusing to accept limits on our consumption or activity, we perpetuate a death-dealing dynamic in the world. That is why the discipline of fasting is so profoundly important today. Abstaining from food is the original meaning and most basic expression of a fast.⁹⁴

Fasting has served as one of the most notable methodologies for spiritual formation training. It helps one to understand self-control in the most direct and physical way, and it also provides an opportunity to reflect on one's conscience and inner ego. Therefore self-

⁹⁴ Marjorie J. Thompson, *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*, 80.

control and godliness will prevent not only church problems but also social problems.

Self-control and godliness function as the very foundation of spiritual formation training. In fact, among the eight virtues, self-control and godliness are introduced fifth and sixth, respectively, and this means self-control and godliness are better suited to the Korean church, which has long since begun its spiritual formation training, than to those who recently have begun their faith. It also explains why most of the spiritual formation training efforts are done in abbeys – to highlight the need for and the difficulty of practicing self-control. It is apparent that without an utter understanding and perception of self-control, it is impossible to practice this virtue in everyday life. For this reason, those with greater interest than the average person in spiritual formation training seek abbeys, for they provide a more accommodating environment. It is true that abbeys do offer a better environment for self-control and godliness. However, spiritual formation training must be done at any time at any place – in other words, in our everyday lives.

To grow in holiness, disciples must be disciplined in self-control and godliness. History shows a strong correlation between holiness and self-control and godliness, such as through Wesley's small group movements and their transformative effect on the English society in the eighteenth century. To create similar transformation within the Korean society, it can be deduced that today's Korean Christians must also be disciplined in these virtues.

Until today, the Korean church's discipleship training faithfully focused on general Bible studies to nurture a basic Christian knowledge base. However, it has failed to provide solutions to practicing self-control against impulsive carnal desires and temptations. Furthermore, many Christians have not been educated on how to practice

self-control outside of church. It is anticipated that spiritual formation training that focuses on self-control and godliness may not only help to discipline one's inner being, but also enhance the holiness of the entire Korean church.

Spiritual Formation Training through Self-Control

Knowing what self-control means is important in discipleship training. Self-control is not only the first step, but also a key word in the disciplines of abstinence. Therefore, I will explain what self-control means and how we can develop it in our daily lives.

Definition of Self-Control

The term self-control used in 2 Peter is interchangeable with “ἐγκράτεια.” This word originates from “κράτ,” which means “power” or “lordship,” all of which were used to describe a power bestowed upon an object or a person. It also means “governing, persisting for, and controlling something that is not one's own.” For this reason, the English equivalent of “dominion which one has over oneself or something,” which is self-control, can be said to be a rightful translation.⁹⁵

The term self-control has been greatly influenced by Greek and Hellenistic philosophies.⁹⁶ It has, in fact, been accepted to serve the most important role in philosophical ethics since the times of old. Socrates described self-control as such in *Republic*: “Soberness is a kind of beautiful order and a continence of certain pleasures and appetites, as they say, using the phrase ‘master of himself’ I know not how, and there

⁹⁵ Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of The New Testament*, vol. 2, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1964), 339.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 340.

are other similar expressions that as it were point us to the same trail. Is that not so?”⁹⁷

Even as defined by Socrates, it can be seen that self-control is an ability or power to persevere through and control one’s own ambitions and emotions. Therefore, self-control is not a discipline that is evaluated by what is outwardly shown, but a training that is done to improve and enhance one’s inner being.

Developing Self-Control

Self-Control through Faith

The potential for success for Christian spiritual formation training is not determined by our wills or perseverance, but by the assurance in knowing that God has already given us the ability to control ourselves through His son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, we must believe that we possess the ability for self-control. We may also develop and improve our self-control through Jesus Christ, who dwells within us. We must put our faith in Jesus and His authorities when temptations, carnal desires, and emotions attempt to govern over us. As we become disciplined in focusing on Jesus Christ, who is within us, we are given the ability to control ourselves.

In order for us to reach greater and higher forms of holiness, we must focus on Jesus more. According to Kempis, he has insisted the importance of self-control as below:

The weak in spirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnal and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires ... True quietness of heart therefore is gotten by resisting our passion, not by obeying them. Therefore is then no peace in the heart of a carnal man, nor in him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spiritual and fervent man.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 4, *Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (GA: Clayton, IntelLex Corporation, 1993), p 672 (430e-430e); available from <http://0-pm.nlx.com.patris.apu.edu/xtf/view?docId=plato/plato.01.xml;chunk.id=div.plato.hmcr.27;toc.id=div.plato.hmcr.23;brand=default;query=self%20control&ticket=ST-431103-5AKUA7bSMXbTUIMbm1QI-ca> (accessed 29 May 2013).

⁹⁸ Thomas A. Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*. 29.

As mentioned above, it is nearly impossible to train oneself in self-control through individual efforts. Only when one realizes that the most significant and important principle for developing better self-control is by relying on Jesus Christ, who dwells within us, can a life of self-control become possible.

Self-Control through Habits

Habitual training in self-control also plays an important role. As mentioned above, Socrates viewed self-control as a form of order. When evil within a person overtakes good, he or she called it “unself-controlled and licentious.” On the contrary, when good governs evil, he or she called it “self-control.”

But, said I, the intended meaning of this way of speaking appears to me to be that the soul of a man within him has a better part and a worse part, and the expression self-mastery means the control of the worse by the naturally better part. It is, at any rate, a term of praise. But when, because of bad breeding or some association, the better part, which is the smaller, is dominated by the multitude of the worse, I think that our speech censures this as a reproach, and calls the man in this plight unself-controlled and licentious.⁹⁹

In other words, building a good and strong order may help greatly to develop self-control. It may also be said that self-control is a form of internal discipline that helps create positive and beneficial habits for spiritual formation training.

God’s holiness is not reflected through us and our demeanors because of our wrongful spiritual habits, which results from sin. God’s holiness comes in various forms depending on the person because each person reacts differently to God’s grace, and this reaction is based on one’s spiritual order that has been established through habits. For this reason, such lack of good spiritual habits may be attributed to the reasons for today’s

⁹⁹ Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p 672 (431a-431b).

lack of self-control, as well as to the decline of the spirituality of many churches and ministers.¹⁰⁰

Gordon Macdonald specifically and clearly has identified exorbitant ambition for success and obsessive pursuit of labor overload as the symptoms of a broken spiritual order. He also has addressed negligence of social interactions, over-valuing competition, easily becoming enraged, and living an overly occupied life as the precepts of a broken spiritual order. Even if one achieves a purposed success, Macdonald has said, it is an incomplete success if done so with a broken spiritual order. Such incomplete achievement produces a crippling effect when one confronts a conflict, for what is lacking is the discipline that is required for developing the ability to solve unfavorable and unforeseen issues.¹⁰¹

On the contrary, a holy life through spiritual maturity is possible for those who have established a proper spiritual order. Macdonald has insisted that when people acknowledges their role as keeper and not as the lord over their lives, establishing a spiritual order becomes easier. In other words, they must base their role and identity on the assurance of knowing and believing that they are only a keeper. And such people, who have received their callings, tend to manage their time and tasks on a priority-basis. It is said that such people are fully aware of what must be done, as well as when and how to complete these tasks.¹⁰² Therefore, those who has established a proper spiritual order may live holier lives with greater self-control.

¹⁰⁰ John S. Park, “*Scriptures: Its Spirituality and Proclamation*” (Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA, March 31, 2011).

¹⁰¹ Gordon Macdonald, *Ordering Your Private World* (NY: A Division of Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 32-38.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 55-65.

Self-control through Solitude

Dunnam has emphasized the importance of silence for solitude discipline in his book. “Solitude is not only an essential discipline for those of religious orders who take vows of solitude, not only essential for those who live in community, it is a discipline for spiritual growth for all who wish to pursue Christian life seriously.”¹⁰³ The most important area to be disciplined when developing self-control is the tongue. In other words, self-control over words is of paramount importance, which brings the need to be disciplined in silence. Disciplining oneself in silence may aid in discovering ways to control the tongue, and help to focus on Jesus and listen to His voice more attentively.

Bonhoeffer also has insisted on the importance of silence, which enables hearing God’s voice, as below.

We are silent at the beginning of the day because God should have the first word, and we are silent before going to sleep because the last word also belongs to God, and therefore not in order to show disregard for the Word but rather to honor and receive it. Silence is nothing else but waiting for God’s Word and coming from God’s Word with blessing.¹⁰⁴

As mentioned above, without silence, one cannot hear God’s Word. Without His Word, one can neither participate, nor reach, the divine order. So we must dedicate a time and space from our lives to be disciplined in silence. Bonhoeffer also has explained that silence helps to subjugate sin.

Often we combat our evil thoughts most effectively if we absolutely refuse to allow them to be expressed in words. It is certain that the spirit of self-justification can be overcome only by the Spirit of grace; nevertheless, isolated thoughts of judgment can be curbed and smothered by never allowing them the right to be uttered, except as a confession of sin, which we shall discuss later.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Maxie Dunnam, *The Work Book on Spiritual Disciplines*, 114.

¹⁰⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 79.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 91-92.

In other words, through silence, not only can we hear God's words, but also possess the ability to control our sinful nature. Furthermore, silence and self-control help one to reach holiness and govern one's mind and body.¹⁰⁶

Simplified Life

Jesus serves as the sole example of what everyone should aspire to be. He lived a life of self-control. For instance, He fed His followers with His power. However, He never consented to the wasting of the bread which He had produced with His miraculous power (John 6:12). As we follow the life of self-control Jesus lived, we may resemble Him more. Spiritual formation training that one needs to take to become like Jesus should be that of frugality through self-control. John Stott has insisted on the need for self-control in his book, *The Radical Disciple*, as follows:

While some of us have been called to live among the poor, and others to open our homes to the needy, all of us are determined to develop a simpler life-style. We intend to reexamine our income and expenditure, in order to manage on less and give away more. ... Those of us who live in the Third World acknowledge that we too are exposed to the temptation to covetousness.¹⁰⁷

The basis of spiritual formation training is on the power of self-control that becomes apparent in simplified lives. Simplification was the formula of Jesus's life. In this sense, Stott's argument, which focuses on simplification as the core of discipleship, must be applied uniformly throughout our lives.

The person who introduced simplification as the true sign of discipleship and argued against the dangers of materialistic greed was David Watson, who spoke with Stott at the International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle in England in March 1980. In

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ John Stott, *The Radical Disciple: Some neglected aspects of our calling* (IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2010), 76.

his book, *Discipleship*, he has mentioned the importance of the simple lifestyle:

Covetousness is perhaps the most serious sin in the West (or North) today and no covetous person will inherit the kingdom of God. The strictures against all forms of covetousness in the scriptures are powerful. Always we come back to this basic to this basic issue: Who or what comes first in our life? Only when the Lordship of Christ is clearly recognized- and our attitude to possessions will test this as nothing else can- can we truly be his disciples.¹⁰⁸

He has argued that simplification is not a prerequisite for discipleship. Rather, it serves a higher purpose by being the true sign – a privilege – of those who were saved and became God’s people. Simplification, therefore, must be advocated as equally as self-control as a required virtue.

Spiritual Formation Training through Godliness

There is no such word that is more confusing than the word godliness for Christians, because many people are caught in a fantasy when they talk about it. Therefore, you must understand godliness first, and I will research how we can develop godliness in our life.

Definition of Godliness

“εὐσεβία” in Greek philosophy or literature means “respect,” and it is used to represent any efforts taken toward establishing national and international order, including behaviors or dispositions. This “order” has been comprehended as if under a divine authority or protection. In fact, it has been understood that all forms of order and the authority to maintain such order were under a divine protection. Furthermore, it possesses the implication that maintaining order means having “a proper attitude to the gods” or having “piety.”

Godliness as used in 2 Peter 1:7 shows a similar meaning, and it is not a word

¹⁰⁸ David Watson, *Discipleship*, 215.

that frequently appears in the New Testament, except in Paul's epistles. However, it is assumed that the term godliness in the New Testament was not influenced by Greek philosophies or literatures. In the New Testament, the word godliness was used to highlight a certain behavior or to evaluate a man's morality, and Paul used it to describe the relationship people had with themselves and with God. An example of this usage is in First Timothy in Chapter 3. A distinguishable and noteworthy characteristic of Paul's godliness is that it has no relation to religious rituals or behaviors. Rather, it is related to service and devotion. Furthermore, 2 Peter 1:7 seems to have been recorded to draw a poignant contrast with the unethical and ungodly behaviors of the contemporaneous cultists.¹⁰⁹ When one contemplates upon the contents above, the meaning of godliness does not share grounds with religious definitions. Rather, it is more closely related to the relationship one establishes with him- or herself, others, and God through his or her moral values and virtues.

It is credited to Friedrich Schleiermacher's exertion of influence that the term godliness was recognized as a word that describes individual piety to God. Justo L. Gonzales has insisted that Schleiermacher had focused on godliness as self-consciousness or individual piety:

In the Speeches, religious feeling had been described in imprecise ways. It was a sense of unity with the Whole. Now in *The Christian Faith*, we are clearly told that religious feeling, which he terms piety, is 'the conscious of being absolutely dependent, or, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God.'... Schleiermacher further describes piety as an 'immediate self-consciousness,' by which he means that it is not based on intellectual reflection, but is of the category of feeling.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 7, 176-184.

¹¹⁰ Justo L. Gonzales, *A History of Christian Thought: From the Protestant Reformation to the Twentieth Century*, vol. 3 (TN: Abingdon Press, 1975), 350.

Schleiermacher argued that emotion serves as the true nature of reason and behaviors. Since the religious importance of emotions was highlighted, the word godliness was used to imply individual piety. This argument resulted in persuading the general population to accept individual piety. However, the lack of correlation and relation between godliness and religious rituals and behaviors, but rather with moral values and virtues, amplifies the importance of including training for godliness in spiritual formation training.

Developing Godliness

Godliness through the Life of Consideration

The Bible and its contents are about how much God considers and cares for people. A love without consideration for another is not love – rather, it may become an obsession and violence. Likewise, a passion that does not consider others may lead to destruction. Without a considerate heart, any ministering or evangelizing effort cannot be complete. In fact, many efforts for spiritual formation training in Korea have fallen short of pursuing and achieving a greater spiritual maturity because of this lack of considerateness.

For instance, many Christians in Korea who participated in disciple training believe that they are spiritually superior to those who did not. Also, the Korean church seems to weigh uniformity in methods of discipleship training and increasing the number of congregation members greater than nurturing individuals' uniqueness. Due to this reason, the consideration Jesus showed to individuals' characteristics became more difficult to emulate and observe. True discipleship is shown and becomes more evident not by one's self-perception of godliness or power, but by how he or she considers and cares for others. Likewise, the true purpose of spiritual formation training may also be

achieved through considering and caring for others.

Bonhoeffer has helped us understand what the true meaning of considerateness is:

God does not will that I should fashion the other person according to the image that seems good to me that is, in my own image; rather in his very freedom from me God made this person in His image. ... To me the sight may seem strange, even ungodly. But God creates every man in likeness of His Son, the Crucified.¹¹¹

As Bonhoeffer already mentioned, considerateness is about accepting and understanding others as God's unique creations despite the differences, even foreignness, between them and oneself.

The meaning of consideration by Bonhoeffer may be viewed to have the same principle with the contents found in Martin Buber's writings "I and Thou:"

In vain you seek to reduce this I to something that derives its power from itself, nor can you limit this You to anything that dwells in us. Both would once again de-actualize the actual, the present relation. I and You remain; everyone can speak the You and then becomes I; everyone can say Father and then becomes son; actuality abides.¹¹²

As Buber has explained, "you" can be used, not only to address someone else, but to truly discover who "I" is. Therefore, one must always be aware that considerateness is where the true discovery of "I" takes place by acknowledging and accepting "you". Therefore, true considerateness focuses more on consideration for others than on me in following Jesus.

In the New Testament, Jesus came to this world to achieve three purposes: to serve (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45), to give His life (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45), and to

¹¹¹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 79

¹¹² Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 116-117.

preach (Luke 19:10; Mark 1:38).¹¹³ Jesus came to give His all, such as His powers, His time, and even His life. The purpose of discipleship training is to resemble after and follow Jesus – if so, all disciples must consider the above three purposes as their own. Only when we give our all as Jesus gave His all, can we call ourselves disciples. This applies to considerateness also. We should not indulge in seeing God within us, but rather in giving everything we possess according to His guidance. Training of godliness is like disciplining in giving and sharing, which are collectively known as consideration.

Godliness training comes in following Jesus Christ. As Jesus told us, we cannot wholly follow Jesus unless we forfeit our possessions (Luke 14:26, 33). Following Jesus Christ is directly related to how much value we assign to our possessions. To this, Dunnam comments as such:

Jesus dealt with possessions in a radical way because he knew that our possessions too often possess us. It is a sign of our “original sin” that we are possessive. The unconverted self, the ego is in bondage to things, slavishly persistent in acquisition. ... So the discipline of generosity is essential for spiritual growth. Because the acquiring and holding aspects of our being are so tenacious, generosity must begin with giving of ourselves.¹¹⁴

If we stubbornly and obsessively commit to our possessions, we cannot be like Jesus despite all the discipline and Bible study. However, when we live a life of giving and sharing as Jesus guides us from within, we may experience his dwelling and power in our lives more directly.

Godliness through the Life of Giving

Dunnam has emphasized right allocation of time and money as the basis for

¹¹³ John S. Park, “*Scriptures: Its Spirituality and Proclamation*,” (Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA, March 31, 2011).

¹¹⁴ Maxie Dunnam, *The Workbook on spiritual Disciplines*, 138-139.

disciplining mercifulness. He especially has highlighted tithing as the main principle for spiritual formation training as it relates to money. He has argued that through tithing, one may learn what to do and what not to do with money.¹¹⁵ Also, the author has emphasized that people rarely reserve time for others, yet as Christians they should offer others their services whenever their help is requested. However, such methods of spiritual formation training, which focus on money and time, cannot be properly practiced in abbeys or in solitude. Therefore, through training in mercifulness as a specific and practical means of godliness discipline, we may discover the basic principle of reaching our very deepest and meditative realm.

The discipline of giving and sharing money and time helps us to realize Jesus' power in our lives. To this, Willard mentioned the meaning of giving:

For the productive character giving has an entire different meaning. Giving is the highest expression of potency. In the very act of giving I experience my strength, my wealth, my power. The experience of heightened vitality fills me with joy. I experience myself as overflowing, spending, alive, hence as joyous. Giving is more joyous than receiving, not because it is a deprivation, but because in the act of giving lies the expression of my aliveness.¹¹⁶

We can see and be assured of God's complete work in us when we live a life of giving and sharing. Not only that, but we will no longer indulge in the illusions of self-imposed godliness. Rather, we will be able to experience and enjoy the true value and beauty of our soul.

Summary

Self-control and godliness function as the very foundation of spiritual formation

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 145-150.

¹¹⁶ Erich Fromm, *The Art of Living* (New York: Harper, 1974), 18-19; quoted in Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (CO: NavPress, 2002), 69

training. Developing better self-control is achieved by relying on Jesus Christ, who dwells within us, and who can make our lives of self-control become possible.

Disciplining oneself in silence may aid in discovering ways to control the tongue, and may help to focus on Jesus and listen to his voice more attentively. Godliness was used to highlight a certain behavior or to evaluate a person's morality and to describe the relationship people had with themselves and with God. Through consideration and the life of giving, we may experience his dwelling and power in our lives more directly.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Interest in discipleship training during the 1980s functioned as a catalyst that made changes and growth in the Korean church possible. Also, the explosive growth of the churches that actively utilized discipleship training attracted much attention from other churches. Even today, the Korean church will grow into a better reflection of a true church through employing active discipleship training. However, the content and infrastructure of discipleship training must change as the society and environment in which today's Korean church strives have been steadily changing. In addition, discipleship training must be better-balanced and well-proportioned between engagement and abstinence, for much of its weaknesses has resulted from the imbalance between the two disciplines. It is anticipated that a greater change will be brought forth when abstinence, as emphasized by spiritual disciplines, accompanies the already widely accepted engagement.

The majority of spiritual formation trainings in the Korean church were done through the disciplines of engagement, which, through various forms of lectures and discussions, highlighted the logical understanding of the Bible. The results of this form of discipleship training allow by the Korean church to discover new engines for growth. In addition, Korean Christians found their sense of identity through the systematically structured programs of discipleship training. However, the imbalance between

engagement and abstinence created a spiritual desperation among many Korean Christians, and there has been a demand for more active spiritual formation training to help believers undergo a more complete change and transformation into true disciples. In other words, spiritual formation training must be integrated as a continual means of discipleship training to help Christians experience and resemble Christ.

Additionally, correctly understanding the concept of spiritual formation training helps the Korean church to approach holiness and encourages the disciplines of abstinence, which had been overshadowed by the overemphasis on the disciplines of engagement. To avoid this imbalance, churches must carefully conduct and employ both the disciplines of engagement and the disciplines of abstinence equally. Until now, the disciplines of abstinence have only been conducted at a personal level rather than at a communal level, and for this reason mysticism and individualism have been considered the chief characteristics of the disciplines of abstinence and spiritual formation training. Not only that, they have been viewed as a digression from social responsibility and service to the community, which discouraged the Korean church to fully accept them as a means of spiritual growth. However, Christian spirituality and holiness are not acquirable through human efforts or persistence. They can only be endowed by God and must be preceded by continual training and application in life. Therefore, when discipleship training and spiritual formation training work in union and harmony, their synergy will amplify their strengths and improve their weaknesses, which will help develop and nourish more holistic disciples.

Second Peter 1:3-11 sets the direction and feasibility of, as well as the necessity for, spiritual disciplines. It also identifies the possibility of our resemblance after Jesus

Christ through spiritual formation training as a divine endowment. Its eight virtues must accompany disciple training because they are the most basic components of all disciplines and mark the beginning of any ministry and education. However, this education has a different meaning from that of the world – educating within a ministry does not represent a transfer of religious knowledge or information; rather, it represents the transfer of applicable knowledge which has been acquired through the intrinsic experiencing of Jesus Christ. In fact, spiritual formation training may be considered as a response to the faith that has been cultivated through divine experience. For this reason, the true nature of spiritual formation training arguably lies in discovering and aspiring to be as holy as Jesus Christ who dwells within us. However, the eight virtues as outlined in 2 Peter 1:3-11 do not conform to any particular order or plan. Nevertheless, they are all interrelated.

Among the eight virtues, there must be proper disciplines in self-control and godliness to connect discipleship training and spiritual formation training. However, applying and integrating self-control and godliness into the Korean church is not an easy task. This difficulty is very well and clearly portrayed by the fact that they are practiced almost solely at abbeys, aloof from everyday life. However, they cannot be properly and utterly achieved when distanced from the secular world. Self-control and godliness serve not only as a tool for discipleship training and spiritual formation training, but also for the growth and maturity of the Korean church. Furthermore, silence, simplicity, consideration, and the life of giving, which have largely been neglected, will help Korean Christians to discover their true sense of identity as Christ's disciples. Additionally, we may be able to

more powerfully preach Jesus Christ to the world through our considerateness and by living the life of giving.

In conclusion, I also would suggest to the Korean churches other methods of abstinence for discipleship training. The reader has been given a glimpse of the greater potential for success from the examples of Wesley's small group movement. However, the problem is that today's society is not like 18th century England. Today's Korean society is impatient, does not understand abstinence, and forsakes respect and mercy. It has been the focal point of this study to discover ways to encourage Christians to devote themselves to disciplines of abstinence. The following are a few suggestions to help today's Christians.

The Korean church is renowned for its "shout out" prayers. It is necessary for revival and growth. However, preparing a space for sporadic silent fasting and prayers in a church may provide an opportunity for people to reflect and meditate on their spirituality, which may provide a time for disciplines of abstinence.

In today's Korean church, fasting prayers are done at an individual level. However, Wesley's small groups selected certain days to devote to fasting prayer for the entire congregation. Through such practice, the Korean Christian may understand the need and importance of disciplines of abstinence. Also, in the midst of today's readily available social media, turning off the television and restraining from using the Internet may assist in self-reflection and self-meditation.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, the practice of prayer repeatedly in a day will provide abundant spiritual life.

There are not many people today who would stay for a long time at a prayer

¹¹⁷ Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 218-222.

center. In fact, society does not provide the kind of environment for a church member to visit prayer centers. Unfortunately, and quite frankly, even if a member stays at a prayer center, over-staying for solitude disciplining may not be the best way for spiritual development. Rather, it may diminish the creation of true spiritual formation training. Despite this, having a short-term retreat for church members for solitude and silence disciplining as part of church activities may help spiritual development. In fact, there are many churches that host retreats for discipleship training. Attending and spending time at these retreats will certainly help to provide opportunities for solitude and silence disciplining.

The above activities require a certain level of determination. However, one also may discipline him- or herself in daily solitude and silence through personal journaling. If Quiet Time (QT) is designed to help a believer hear God's voice through reading the scriptures, personal journaling is about observing with a new perspective one's life before God. In other words, QT will help one to hear God's voice, and solitude and silence will provide an opportunity to help one see his or her inner being.

Until now, the lack of balance between the disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence has been attributed as the reason for the Korean church's inability to make true disciples. This was due to the over-emphasis on the disciplines of engagement, which overshadowed the benefits of the disciplines of abstinence. It is true that disciplines of engagement has enabled an exponential growth of the Korean church, but it often has fallen short in producing and nourishing true disciples, and most of the time, such efforts ended as mere Bible study groups. It also implanted a negative view of

the church to the general public, because discipleship training had overly and solely focused on discipline of engagement.

Many problems may be solved when the Korean church utilizes a balanced training between the disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence. Willard clarified his theological position on this issue in his book and spoke for the collaboration of disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence. Also, Wesley's small group campaigns, which serve as a good example of spiritual growth, were made possible by creating a balance between disciplines of engagement and disciplines of abstinence. However, because the Korean church executed its disciple training mostly on disciplines of engagement, such as Bible study, it lacked the characteristics and features that were crucial for producing true believers.

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APPENDIX
EXAMPLES OF STUDYING SILENCE

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Lesson 1

1. Preparation for Discipline of Silence¹¹⁸

- 1) Plan a place and time where you can pray repeatedly three times a day (If you practice a lot of times, you will be able to have time to pray, even inside a car).
 - 2) Choose a place where there is nothing that can disturb you. Bring a Bible, Hymnal, a journal, and writing utensils.
 - 3) Don't talk and make space from things that make noise.
 - 4) Cut your time using radios, T.V.s, phones, and computers by 30 minutes for one day.
 - 5) Find a place in the church where you can pray freely and loudly.
 - 6) Walk in parks or hiking trails while thinking of God who created this world.
 - 7) When you're uncomfortable or desperate, instead of calling someone you know, read over the words of the Bible and ask the faithful God for help.
2. Start by reciting the Lord's Prayer line by line. What is the difference between this type of prayer and a regular one? Slowly recite the entire Lord's Prayer again with a loud voice.

3. Understanding of Silence

1) Why do we need Discipline of Silence?

Solitude plays a key role in spiritual discipline for all Christians. According to Maxie Dunnam, he mentions the importance of the solitude in his book. "Solitude is not only an essential discipline for those of religious orders who take vows of solitude, not only essential for those who live in community, it is a discipline for spiritual growth for

¹¹⁸ Larry Warner, *Journey with Jesus* (IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2010), 30-31.

all who wish to pursue the Christian life seriously.”¹¹⁹

No one can reach the solitude without discipline of silence and no one expect growth in spiritual maturity in disregard of silence. Bonhoeffer explains the meaning of silence as below:

“The mark of solitude is silence, as speech is the mark of community. Silence and speech have the same inner correspondence and difference as do solitude and community. One does not exist without the other. ... Silence is the excess, the inebriation, the victim of speech.”¹²⁰

His explanation about silence as solitude shows the close connections between silence and solitude. As he already mentioned, this does not mean that silence does not say anything or it keeps silence. It is possible to keep silence, when only Christians have a fully confidence on God. Therefore the insistence of Bonhoeffer is a correct that silence is the excess, the inebriation, the victim of speech because one who entirely trust God he can keep silence and find a peace of mind at any situation. Therefore if you want to learn silence, you have to have a faith on God. Silence never means speechlessness.

- 1) What is the difference between the description of silence shown above and the silence you thought about?
- 2) Do you need Discipline of Silence? If you do, what do you think the Discipline of Silence can help you with?
- 3) Let's all pray so that the Holy Spirit can help us with controlling our tongue.
4. Finish with a prayer of thanks to God such as the Benedict's prayer shown below:

O' God, bless my spirit and body
O' God, bless my faith and the environment around me
O' God, bless my mind and mouth

¹¹⁹ Maxie Dunnam, *The Workbook on Spiritual Disciplines*, 114.

¹²⁰ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 78.

O' God, bless the things I do with my hands!

Lesson 2

1. Let's begin with reciting the Lord's Prayer line by line.
2. Let's share about the changes that happened in your life and thinking throughout the Discipline of Silence.

3. Start with a prayer of thanks to God such as the Benedict's prayer shown below:

O' God, bless my spirit and body
O' God, bless my faith and the environment around me
O' God, bless my mind and mouth
O' God, bless the things I do with my hands!

4. Meditating on God's Words

- 1) Confess yourself to God before reading the Bible.
- 2) Read over Matthew 27:11~14; Mark 15:1~5; Luke 23:8~12 about 2~3 times and compare them.
 - Read the Bible and its topics carefully and read it repeatedly.
 - While you're reading, read over the verses that are touching to your heart.
 - Record those verses on a small sheet of paper or a journal.
 - Pray so that you can hear God's words.
 - Cherish those words in your mind so that they will go deep down in your heart.
- 3) Draw the situation from the scripture in your head
- 4) Draw a picture of how Jesus looked.
- 5) Draw a picture of Pontius Pilate and the chief priests. Write about the questions Pilate may have asked Jesus.
- 6) Why didn't Jesus say anything?
- 7) If you were in the same situation, would you have been silent like Jesus?

8) What does Jesus being silent in his situation tell us about ourselves?

Jesus was silent even when he was on the cross. The reason why he was like that was because he had complete faith toward God.

“No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” (John 10:18)

His complete faith toward God was the reason that kept Jesus silent.

To reach solitude by training, you must have faith toward God. Do you want to learn how to meditate to God? Have faith toward God!

5. The sharing and applying of one's life for the Discipline of Silence.

1) What recent things have you experienced that frightened you? Or did you have to brag to others because you have experienced a happy event in your life?

2) What special feeling have you received at the time when you felt like you had to brag to others, but you didn't?

3) Pray for a bigger faith in your heart if you can trust the fact that the belief of God can bring peace and control to your mind.

6. Finish with a prayer of thanks to God such as the Benedict's prayer shown below

(Pray for the person around you the same prayers, except that instead of my, use their):

O' God, bless my spirit and body

O' God, bless my faith and the environment around me

O' God, bless my mind and mouth

O' God, bless the things I do with my hands!

